

TIMES, SUNDAY
Armenia post-Soviet stamp
El Greco painter fetches new figure
Prague news — elections elections?
Europe's big sandcastle Dutch beach
Fergie, Andie away from it Balmoral
Langman's memorabilia London auction

Eight killed, 150 arrested in Algeria

ALGIERS (AP) — Five army battalions swept a remote mountain region east of the capital Saturday searching for armed Muslim guerrillas and arresting 150 people, Algerian newspapers reported Sunday. Eight people were killed in the operation, including three soldiers, according to preliminary government figures. The sweep was part of a two-week battle against armed Muslim resistors who have taken refuge in the mountains about 80 kilometres from Algiers. The daily Alger Republicain said 1,500 soldiers and an unknown number of helicopters were used in the 10-hour operation Saturday. Newspapers said the sweep had been planned and carried out in secret on Mont Zbarbar, a remote region 12 kilometres south of the town of Lakhadria. Unconfirmed reports said the military operation was mounted to destroy a training camp for several dozen militant fundamentalists. The camp was said to have been set up by Said Mekhloufi, a former army officer now aligned with the banned fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Jerusalem official denies Egyptian reports

AMMAN (Petra) — The assistant secretary-general of Jerusalem's Aqsa Mosque, Abdul Azim Salhab, Sunday described as total slander and baseless report, carried by Egyptian newspapers, saying that the department's secretary general had appealed to the Egyptian government to help restore the Aqsa Mosque. In a statement he sent to Arabic newspapers issued in the occupied territories, Sheikh Salhab said that the reports were "baseless and a mere slander." He stressed that the legitimate authority which has the prerogative to restore and supervise the restoration of the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, represented by the Ministry of Aqsa and Islamic Affairs and its departments and institutions in both East and West Banks, Banks of Jordan. He reaffirmed that the committee in charge of the restoration of the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock headed by the Aqsa minister is the sole technical committee which has the authority to prepare studies, and plans for the restoration of the shrines.

Volume 17 Number 5018

AMMAN MONDAY, JUNE 1, 1992, THU EL HILJA 1, 1412

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

King visits Prime Ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday visited the Prime Ministry where he met with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and issued directives on several foreign and domestic issues. The meeting was attended by Royal Court chief Khaleel Al Karaki.

Arab states send aid to Somalia

CAIRO (AP) — Arab countries are sending money and doctors to help Somalia where civil strife has killed and wounded more than 30,000 people in the past six months, the secretary general of the Arab League said Sunday. Esmat Abdul Meguid told reporters after meeting with the permanent representatives of the 21-member Arab League that he hoped more countries will help Somalia which is a member of the Arab League. "We appreciate these efforts completely. Saudi Arabia has provided some money. Egypt has sent doctors. Kuwait has also sent doctors, our Palestinian brothers have offered to send some doctors to Somalia and we hope more aid in the form of food and medical assistance is offered to the brotherly people of Somalia," Dr. Abdul Meguid said.

Kuwait expels Reuter correspondent

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait expelled a Reuter correspondent on Sunday, the first foreign reporter to be ordered out of the emirate since its liberation from Iraqi occupation in February last year. Correspondent Diana Abdallah, a 32-year-old Lebanese, was served with a deportation order over a story which upset the government. Reuters editor-in-chief Mark Wood urged the Kuwaiti authorities to reconsider the expulsion, which he said was a harsh reaction. Mr. Wood had already made a personal appeal to the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, on Friday to withdraw the expulsion order. The government took exception to a story written by Ms. Abdallah erroneously linking the emir to the defeated side in last Monday's Kuwait Chamber of Commerce leadership elections, widely seen as a dry run for parliamentary polls in October. Reuters corrected the report and apologized to the government.

Rebels kill village head in Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Rebel Kurds killed a village head in southeast Turkey on Sunday, bringing to 60 the number of people killed in the past week in Kurdish-related violence, security officials said. Abdullah Ay was killed in Silvan near Diyarbakir, provincial capital of the southeast. Nearly 3,800 people have been killed in eight years of Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) insurgency.

Lebanon hopes Germans will be freed in June

JEB JENINE, Lebanon (R) — Lebanon's interior minister said on Sunday he hoped that two kidnapped Germans, the last Western hostages in Lebanon, would be freed in June. Sami Al Khatib told reporters in eastern Lebanon that German aid workers Heinrich Struempel and Thomas Kempfner, kidnapped in May 1989, came close to freedom three months ago. "The matter is being reconsidered... I hope these two German hostages are freed in June," Mr. Khatib added. The government, anxious for foreign aid and investment, is keen to see an end to the hostage problem.

Grenade kills 2 in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (AP) — A hand grenade exploded in a government office Sunday and killed two people, police said. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the explosion. Police officials said a package sent to the building exploded when a messenger tried to open it. In the past several years hundreds of explosions have rocked Pakistan's rugged frontier town of Peshawar.

King, Arafat review Mideast peace process

PLO seeks U.N. action against Israel

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat held talks here Sunday on the Middle East peace process, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. The King and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chairman also reviewed Jordanian-Palestinian relations and coordination, it said. Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker held talks with Mr. Arafat over a working dinner Sunday night. The talks were attended by senior cabinet members, PLO Political Department chief Farouk Kaddumi, Arafat adviser Hani Al Hassan and the delegation accompanying Mr. Arafat. The meeting reviewed the latest developments in the region and the means to support collective Arab action, particularly among the parties attending the Arab-Israeli peace talks, and to tackle the problems posed by Israel's intransigence and the occupation authorities' measures against the Palestinians in the occupied territories and in Lebanon, Petra said. Mr. Arafat, who arrived here from Syria after talks with President Hafez Al Assad on the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations

launched in Madrid last October, told reporters upon arrival that his visit was aimed at discussing issues of common interest to the Arab World, including the Palestinian question and occupied Arab Jerusalem, and assessing the course of the peace process.

Mr. Arafat said his talks in Amman would "comprehensively review the general situation in the region in the wake of the bilateral and multilateral peace talks." Amman hosts a meeting of the Lebanese, Jordanian and Syrian foreign ministers and the PLO this week to coordinate positions on the peace talks with Israel. Mr. Arafat said the PLO had asked its United Nations representative to urge the Security Council to punish Israel for its actions in the occupied territories and Lebanon.

"Why don't they impose punitive measures against Israel, like they did to Libya... and Serbia?" he said.

"This morning I called on the PLO representative at the U.N. to work towards a call to convene the Security Council to take action against the Zionist, fanatic and extremist entity," he said, adding that this was among the issues that were to be discussed

with the King. "The United States and Russia, sponsors of the peace process, should answer these crimes by Israel against women, children and the holy places... by implementing the same punishment as on Libya and against the Serbs," he added.

"We have abided by the peace process but let nobody think that we don't have any other options and our patience has limits."

Mr. Arafat accused the world community of a double-standard where Arabs are concerned. "Clearly there are double-standards in international legitimacy. Arabs have to pay the price... while Israel enjoys international legitimacy," he said.

He said his talks with President Assad highlighted the "importance of a unified Arab position in this period to stand up to the challenges faced by our Arab Nation."

Accompanying Mr. Arafat were Yasser Abed Rabbo, Abdullah Horani and other members of the PLO Executive Committee.

Mr. Arafat was met at Amman civil airport by Deputy Prime Minister Thougban Hindawi and other senior officials, as well as the Palestinian ambassador.

85% of Jordanians favour death penalty, poll finds

48% of Arabs back Arab unity by force

AMMAN (J.T.) — More than 85 per cent of Jordanians would like to see capital punishment enacted to stem crime in the country, a poll conducted by the Yarmouk University's Jordan Research Centre indicates. Asked whether they supported the application of Islamic code of punishment to crimes, 83.5 per cent of the 915 people polled responded positively. Out of those, 82.6 per cent thought Islamic Sharia was more than just earthly laws and 81.7 per cent thought it was more effective.

Among those who supported capital punishment, 81 per cent prescribed it for murder, 76 per cent for rape, 36.5 per cent for embezzlement of public funds, 26 per cent for drug use and 21.7 per cent for revenge killing.

Asked whether they thought police carried out their duties effectively 49.6 said yes and 50.4 per cent said no. Out of the latter 33 per cent thought police officers were

unqualified, 24.3 per cent thought policemen had no incentives and 14 per cent thought the police force was understaffed and poorly equipped.

Asked whether they thought Jordan had organised crime, 40 per cent said yes and 60 per cent said no. Out of the 915 polled 94 per cent said they noticed an increase in crime rate in the country and 35 per cent said they have had a crime committed in their neighbourhood.

As for the causes of crimes, 94 per cent blamed unemployment, 76 per cent blamed non-adherence to religious values, 75 per cent blamed poverty, and 70 per cent cited loss of family ties.

Almost 90 per cent of those polled blamed the media for the increase in crime. Asked to rate the effect of television, cinema and the video on this on a scale of one to 10, cinema got 8.2 points, home videos 7.6 points, Israeli Television 6.8 points, Syria TV -

Channel Two 5.6 points, Jordan TV - Channel Two 5.4 points, Middle East TV 5.2 points, Syrian TV Channel One 4.3 points and JTV Channel One 3.3 points.

More than 70 per cent (70.4) thought Jordanian laws did not develop enough to deal changes in society and 78.3 per cent blamed court procedures for the increased rate of crime.

The average age of those polled was 29.3 years and 58.3 per cent of them were under graduates and 20.9 per cent were post graduates.

In another poll by the same centre almost half of the Arabs (48) per cent think that Arab unity can only be attained by force, while the remaining believe it would come through democracy.

The finds were arrived at by a poll conducted in May by the Yarmouk University's Jordan

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Tarawneh reports on review of multilaterals

AMMAN (J.T.) — Progress in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process depends on progress in the bilateral negotiations among the Arab and Israeli parties, a senior Jordanian delegate said Sunday. Dr. Faysal Tarawneh, who returned home from Portugal Sunday after attending a review meeting on the multilateral talks held last month in five world capitals.

Said the common denominator among the various working groups of the multilateral phase is the linkage between the multilateral and bilateral negotiations.

There should be progress in the bilaterals to pave way for the multilateral meetings to proceed in a practical way and discuss regional cooperation, he added. "We cannot start thinking of minor or major issues in the multilaterals if there was no progress in the bilaterals and without setting the basic principles which could serve as terms of reference for peace in the bilaterals," he said. He noted that this is what the Lisbon meeting agreed upon.

The meeting welcomed Palestinian representation from the diaspora in the working groups on refugees and economic cooperation, he said.

JPA committee resigns in response to pressure

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordan Press Association (JPA) will hold new elections next month after its president resigned Sunday bowing to pressure from journalists who petitioned his early departure.

Hashem Khreisat, who was serving his second term as president, announced his resignation after he received a petition signed by 120 journalists asking the nine-member executive committee of the association to bow out and allow for general elections.

This move ended a month of public wrangling and legal consultation over the fate of the committee after a majority of its members resigned in protest of its shortcomings in financial and political performance. There was no indication Sunday over who would run for next month's elections.

On Sunday afternoon, a pre-planned meeting of the JPA general assembly turned into a celebration when attending members of the association were informed of the committee's decision to resign. "Journalists were mostly happy because they were able to unite their forces and accomplish something for their association," a journalist who attended the meeting said.

"We promised ourselves to maintain this positive spirit and work together until we are able to bring the association to a status worthy of its name," said another journalist. The events leading to Sunday's resignation had threatened to reach a

stalemate as both sides to the conflict collected conflicting legal counsel. However, the sheer number of signatures to the petition convinced a fifth member of the executive committee to resign, thereby ending the bickering over the legal status of the existing committee.

"The president and the remaining three members of the committee were faced with two options: Either maintain the status quo and face opposition from 120 members or resign. They resigned," a source close to Sunday's developments told the Jordan Times.

Mr. Khreisat and the existing committee, however, will continue to serve until a new committee is elected.

A meeting of the general assembly of the JPA, to which 231 journalists claim membership, was set for July 3 as a preamble to setting a date for the elections. In their petition the journalists had asked Mr. Khreisat and the remaining members of the executive committee to resign and "call for an extraordinary meeting to elect a new committee capable of carrying out the duties and responsibilities accorded to it."

The journalists said their appeal for the committee's resignation came after they "became certain of this committee's inability to carry out its duties." The campaign for collecting signatures began on May 16 after all efforts at reconciling the feuding sides within the committee failed. The signatures included journalists working with local newspapers and the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as well as Jordanian journalists working for international organisations.



Jordan doubts Israeli version of reported sea-borne Eilat attack

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan does not believe Israel's account of a raid on the southern coast by guerrillas who swam in from the sea, a senior official was quoted as saying Sunday.

The official told Reuters it was physically impossible for them to swim to the Israeli town of Eilat from Jordan, as the Israeli army asserted, and there was no firm proof they had done so.

Information Minister Mahmoud Al Sharif said guerrilla attacks on Israel from all sides could be expected until the Arab-Israeli conflict was resolved. Another official quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that there was no proof that the guerrillas came from Jordan.

The Israeli army had asserted

the guerrillas swam from Aqaba to Eilat and killed a guard before troops gunned them down. It held Jordan accountable for the attack.

"The concerned authorities do not have any proof that some people crossed from Jordan," the official told Petra.

He pointed out that the borders of several countries touch the Gulf of Aqaba and so "it is difficult to know for sure the route that these people took to reach Eilat."

Egypt and Saudi Arabia also have borders that touch on the northern neck of the Gulf of Aqaba.

One senior official on Saturday told the AP in Amman "We are

surprised by this event and we are currently investigating the matter."

"We are sceptical of the Israeli statement... we have no conclusive evidence that these people have crossed from the Jordanian side to the Israeli side," said the senior official quoted by Reuters.

"It is not conceivable that these people crossed with all this equipment," he added.

Information Minister Sharif said: "These incidents in general will unfortunately continue to happen from all sides in the absence of complete peace in the region."

Jordan was committed to peace along the frontier, he added in remarks to Reuters.

Israeli jets raid Bekaa, draw Syrian anti-aircraft fire

JANTA, Lebanon (Agencies) — Israeli planes, helicopters and artillery lashed out at resistance bases in eastern and southern Lebanon on Sunday. Security sources said Syrian anti-aircraft gunners joined in the two-week war.

The raids drew defiance from Hizbollah leaders who warned the United States against meddling in their war on Israel after Washington called for the pro-Iranian movement to be disarmed.

"Real peace only comes by holy war. Our resistance needs no American advice," Naim Qassem, Hizbollah's deputy chief, told followers.

"We tell America to stop interfering in our business. As long as it interferes the whole region will be ablaze."

In Sunday's raids, Israeli planes attacked a Hizbollah base near the Syrian border and helicopters rocketed the houses of two Hizbollah officials in South Lebanon, wounding three civilians, police said.

Six fighter-bombers staged the raid on a Hizbollah training base in the village of Janta in east Lebanon's Bekaa Valley at 10:25 a.m. (0725 GMT), police said. They said two Cobra helicopter gunships mounted the second

raid in the south 15 minutes later. Sunday's raids were the severest and eighth since the current wave of violence between Israel and Hizbollah erupted May 19. By police count, at least 25 people have been killed and 63 wounded in the past 12 days of violence.

In the Bekaa Valley, Syrian anti-aircraft batteries opened up and witnesses said one jet was hit and thick black smoke billowed from one of its wings.

There was no independent confirmation that the plane was hit. A statement from the Israeli military said the planes had accomplished their mission and returned safely.

Police said a civilian was wounded in the Janta raid.

In South Lebanon, police said the helicopters fired four rockets on the houses of the local commanders of Hizbollah in the U.N.-patrolled villages of Majdal Shih and Bir Al Sanasil.

Security sources close to the U.N. peacekeeping force in South Lebanon said the houses of Hizbollah's commanders in the two villages — Ali Abdul Karim Yaseen and Ibrahim Karim — were demolished in direct hits. The sources said both families

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Israelis restate hardline position on Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel's political leaders marked the 25th anniversary of the seizure of Arab East Jerusalem on Sunday by vowing never to bargain away any part of the "united city" they call their "eternal capital."

Housing Minister Ariel Sharon went one step further by pledging to settle Jews in every Palestinian area of the city.

But in an attack underlining the divisions below the surface of the Holy City, a Palestinian stabbed and slightly wounded a Jewish seminary student.

"Our capital is one, Jerusalem, forever. Never will it be a capital for a foreign power," Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said at a ceremony.

Jerusalem is not a subject for bargaining or sale. Just as a man does not bargain over his heart, the people of Israel will not bargain over its nation's heart of hearts," Mr. Shamir said.

Yitzhak Rabin, leader of the opposition Labour Party and army chief during the 1967 war, joined Mr. Shamir in signing a "Jerusalem covenant" underscoring Israeli "sovereignty" over the city.

Israeli politicians, contesting a general election on June 23, com-

peted for the spotlight during the anniversary celebrations.

"We have set a goal for ourselves of not leaving one neighbourhood in East Jerusalem without Jews, not even one," said Mr. Sharon, a general in the 1967 war.

He was speaking at the dedication of a new building for Jewish families in the heart of the Old City's Muslim quarter.

Israel barred a million Palestinians in the occupied West Bank from entering Jerusalem for 24 hours. Roadblocks stopped cars.

The 750,000 Palestinians of the Gaza Strip were blocked from leaving that area for a seventh consecutive day because of the fatal stabbing of an Israeli girl near Tel Aviv last Sunday.

But police said a Palestinian in the city still managed to attack a seminary student.

Labour had accused Mr. Shamir's Likud party of playing down the anniversary because the key roles in the battle were played by officers who are now Labour candidates.

Although Mr. Rabin was not invited to speak at the ceremony, he received the loudest applause. While Labour displayed a

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Mojaddidi assails renegades, hints at retaining power

KABUL (AP) — An angry President Sibtghatullah Mojaddidi accused renegade rebels and hardline communists Sunday of trying to kill him and hinted he might not surrender power to other rebel leaders later this month.

Mr. Mojaddidi told a news conference he was trying to find out who fired three missiles at his plane on Friday, as he returned from Pakistan with his cabinet and loyal rebel commanders.

His remarks casting doubt on whether he will turn over power to a rebel council later this month will likely exacerbate bad feeling mounting in the month-old Islamic leadership.

Mr. Mojaddidi was appointed to a two-month interim term as president following the April capture of Kabul, which ended the 14-year struggle against the Soviet-installed communist government.

"I'm very confused," he said Sunday. "Thousands of rebel commanders, people from Afghanistan, the United States (and) Europe have been asking me what will happen if I don't

continue. There are fears of great danger and bloodshed. Personally I have no desire to continue. But one has to yield to the will of the people. I have not reached a final decision yet."

Mr. Mojaddidi made similar remarks shortly after taking office on April 28. Other rebel leaders immediately rejected the suggestion, and Mr. Mojaddidi backed down.

Security was heavy Sunday at the presidential palace and reporters were searched and metal detectors were set up before the news conference began. Bodyguards surrounded the president as he spoke.

Speaking in defiant tones, the 70-year-old president said he was convinced that forces loyal to maverick rebel leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and ousted President Najibullah's government had worked together to try to kill him.

"In a few days we will be sure who did it. But they should realise that the guardian of life and death is God Almighty," he said. "Sibtghatullah Mojaddidi is not

afraid of these kinds of threats. For 14 years, I have struggled against the Soviet Union and the spread of communism and on more than 100 occasions there have been attacks on me. Since it was not the will of God, I survived," he said.

Mr. Mojaddidi's plane was landing at Kabul airport on Friday when three rockets were fired at it. One of them hit the runway, sending shrapnel through the cockpit and injuring the co-pilot.

The plane began to yaw wildly but the pilot landed safely. Mr. Mojaddidi and his 70-member entourage were not harmed.

"It's a miracle that we survived," he told reporters. Although he refused to blame Mr. Hekmatyar directly, Mr. Mojaddidi pointed out that the Hezb-e-Islami chief had threatened to shoot down his plane before he was sworn in as caretaker president.

Mr. Hekmatyar and other hardline rebel leaders have become increasingly critical of Mr. Mojaddidi recently, accusing him of trying to hang on to power

after agreeing to surrender authority to a leadership council of rebel leaders.

They also have been critical of his unbridled support for General Abdul Rashid Dostum, the commander of the Uzbek militia that engineered the end of Mr. Najibullah's regime and then prevented Mr. Hekmatyar's fighters from seizing Kabul.

Mr. Hekmatyar has refused to join the new Islamic government as long as Gen. Dostum's forces remain in the capital. Last week, in an effort to resolve the standoff, Mr. Hekmatyar and Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masood put together an agreement that calls for Gen. Dostum's forces to return to northern Afghanistan.

Mr. Mojaddidi rejected the agreement on Sunday and said his government was not bound to it.

The agreement between Mr. Hekmatyar and Mr. Masood, still being worked out, also calls for Mr. Mojaddidi to step down after two months and clear the way for the leadership council to prepare for national elections.

Rumblings of U.N. pullout after 28 years in Cyprus

By Martin Morris
The Associated Press

NICOSIA — Greek and Turkish Cypriots are facing the possibility that U.N. peacekeeping troops will be withdrawn from the divided island, leaving the feuding communities face-to-face for the first time in 18 years.

If a pullout materialises, it could turn Cyprus back into a powderkeg or provide a powerful inducement for the two sides to sit down and talk seriously about a settlement after decades of deadlock.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said in his last report it was "unlikely" he would be able to maintain the U.N. force in Cyprus "in its present form beyond the end of the year."

The force's mandate, reviewed every six months, is due for renewal June 12 and is expected to be approved by the Security Council. But it could well be the last time the mandate is extended.

Dr. Ghali cited financial problems and the recent upsurge in deployment of peacekeeping forces in the world's flashpoints as reasons for withdrawing the force on Cyprus.

But the threat also came amid growing U.N. frustration at the failure of the island's rival communities to agree to a peace settlement and appeared designed to prod them towards an agreement.

Cyprus has been split since Turkish troops invaded in 1974 and seized the northern one-third of the island in the wake of a short-lived coup by Athens-backed supporters of union with Greece.

There has been little violence since then. But there has been little sign of progress in U.N.-sponsored efforts to reunify the island.

Both communities are split over what shape a compromise should take, particularly the Greek Cypriots. They were the big losers in 1974, with some



200,000 of their people, one-third of the Greek population, made refugees.

Contributors to the 2,140-strong U.N. force have expressed frustration at the stalemate and a chronic shortage of funds.

Britain, Canada, Finland, Denmark, Ireland and Austria made the troops, with Sweden and Australia contributing military and civilian police.

The peacekeepers were first deployed 28 years ago during sectarian clashes between the majority Muslim Turks and the minority Christian Greeks. Hundreds of people were slain.

Since the Turkish invasion, the force has patrolled the 180 kilometre buffer zone that separates the two communities.

With the United Nations now committed to sending thousands of troops to Yugoslavia, Cambodia, El Salvador and other hotspots, there is a feeling the soldiers in Cyprus could be better used elsewhere.

Canada's external affairs minister, Barbara McDougall, was due to Nicosia Sunday night and is expected to threaten to pull out the 575-member Canadian contingent — the second largest after the British — unless there is progress on reunification.

"Twenty-eight years is a long time and there are places where the secretary-general could deploy these forces more effectively," Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney said

last week.

He said Canada would not go on providing a "security blanket for people who just absolutely refuse to get anything done."

The United Nations owes Ottawa about 17 million dollars Canadian (\$14 million) for maintaining its contingent. Collectively, contributing states are owed \$180 million.

Sweden withdrew its 353 troops in 1987, citing mounting costs and dissatisfaction with the lack of progress towards a political settlement. It continues to provide civilian police.

Nowadays, Turkish Cypriots are generally indifferent towards the U.N. force and consider the estimated 35,000 Turkish troops in the north their only real guarantee of security.

But the possible U.N. withdrawal alarms Greek Cypriots. Defence Minister Andreas Alogoskoufis said a few weeks ago that if the peacekeepers pull out, Turkey, "by using some kind of pretext, will move at once and occupy the buffer zone."

Turkey has not reacted to the claim by Mr. Alogoskoufis, a although Turkish Cypriot leaders have said they believe the two sides could agree to patrol the zone without U.N. help.

"If the two sides could agree on keeping peace in the island, withdrawing the U.N. force should not affect the problem in a negative direction," said Rauf Denktaş, president of the breakaway Turkish republic of northern Cyprus.

Rebels say 1,000 held in Mashhad

NICOSIA (R) — The Iranian opposition movement the Mujahadeen-e-Khalq said on Sunday some 1,000 people were arrested in riots in the Iranian city of Mashhad on Saturday.

Revolutionary Guards opened fire on protesters, killing and wounding many, the Iraqi-based movement told Reuters in Nicosia.

Shooting was audible across the city on Saturday and some residents said earlier that up to six people were killed.

The Mujahadeen's reports on events inside Iran are difficult to confirm but they have sometimes proved reliable.

A Mujahadeen spokesman said the authorities had declared martial law in the northeastern city but again there was no immediate confirmation of this from inside the country.

Tehran Radio, corroborating reports from residents, said the riots broke out when municipal officials moved to demolish squatter houses in a poor quarter of the holy city.

The spokesman said the main protest march took place along Imam Khomeini Street, leading to Martyrs Square.

"People were chanting 'Death to Rafsanjani,' 'Death to Khamenei,' he said. Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani is the Iranian president and Ali Khamenei is the country's supreme leader.

"Most of the government buildings along the street were destroyed, including the municipal offices and the justice department, which were burned to the ground," he added.

Mashhad residents had earlier told Reuters the rioters set fire to buses, wrecked banks and looted government shops.

The Mujahadeen spokesman said the governor general of Khorasan province, whom he named as Jannati, made a television appeal for all available Revolutionary Guardsmen and military units to confront the demonstrators late on Saturday.

Mashhad is the capital of Khorasan.

"There was a major clash as the people tried to march on the governor general's house," he added.

The spokesman said Mujahadeen leader Massoud Rajavi, who comes from Mashhad, had made a radio address on Tuesday calling on Iranians to rise against Mr. Rafsanjani's government.

Last week the New York Times said military and police forces clashed with 2,000 to 3,000 demonstrators in Arak, southwest of Tehran, during protests over the death of a 12-year-old boy in a confrontation over a squatter camp.

The government has been sending in bulldozers to raze squatter dwellings in Iran's cities, home for tens of thousands of unskilled workers who labour in nearby factories.

Unlike the country's peasants, these urban dwellers have not shared in the government's land-redistribution plans.

In Saturday's incident in Mashhad, Tehran radio said "municipal workers tried to carry out the law in connection with the prevention of the illegal construction of buildings."

It said a "rabble" beat the workers, then "set about destroying and setting fire to several vehicles and buildings and looting property and shops."

The radio said several were arrested.

It said the anti-riot demonstrations Sunday called on the government to "not show the least tolerance or sympathy" for those responsible and "give them their just deserts."

President Rafsanjani, whose supporters won a landslide in recent parliament elections, last week promised he would improve the lot of the poorest Iranians.

Yemen welcomes Saudi remarks on border dispute

SANAA (R) — Yemen welcomed on Sunday Saudi Arabia's readiness to negotiate a dispute over an oil-rich border region which has further soured relations between the two neighbours.

"Yemen welcomes the Saudi statement and stresses its previous stand concerning the solving of the border issue," a government statement read over Yemen's television said.

The Saudi statement on Friday accused Yemen of evading several Saudi initiatives to negotiate the border dispute and urged it to start immediate talks to solve the problem.

But Saudi Arabia assured Yemen that it "does not encroach upon anyone's rights and does not have any design on territories of others according to its clear and known policy."

Relations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, strained by Sanaa's pro-Iraqi stance during the Gulf crisis, worsened last month when

Riyadh warned Western oil companies with Yemeni exploration rights close to the unmarked border that they were violating Saudi territory.

British Petroleum cancelled plans this month to drill a Red Sea oil concession. International oil companies that hold oil prospecting concessions in Yemen are to meet in June to discuss the Saudi-Yemeni row.

The Saudi statement was in response to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh's remarks last week that his country wanted to hold the border talks as soon as possible.

"Our country reiterates its stance to negotiate a settlement to the border issue comprehensively and in a way that guarantees both countries' rights and interests," the Yemeni statement said.

Both the Yemeni and the Saudi statements expressed each country's concern to maintain good relations.

U.S. studies rewards for Stinger missiles in Afghan hands

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States is considering offering cash rewards for the return of modern Stinger anti-aircraft missiles secretly supplied to Afghanistan's guerrillas, U.S. officials say.

Stingers — shoulder-fired missiles with a range of more than five kilometres — are regarded as having had contributed significantly to the rebel victory over the former Soviet-backed regime in Kabul.

Now the administration is anxious that the rebels might sell the missiles to other guerrilla forces around the world hostile to Washington and its allies.

"There are two schools of thought within the administration. One is you should do whatever it takes, pay any price to get these weapons back," a senior U.S. official said.

"Another school says at the end of the day, you're never going to get these back. These guys know what they have. They want to keep much of what they have and what they don't want to keep they are going to sell at premium prices, so the missiles are gone for good," he said.

Hundreds of the lightweight Stingers are believed to have been distributed to Afghan rebel factions in the late 1980s after intense debate in Congress.

After former Afghan President Najibullah stepped down last month and the rebels moved into Kabul, the State Department said it was working to recover weapons it gave the guerrillas, including Stingers.

Most of the arms went to U.S.-backed hardliner Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami fighters.

Hezb-e-Islami has been at odds with other rebel organisations throughout the 14-year civil war.

The official added that if there was a chance of reclaiming the weapons, "everybody believes the only way you're going to get Stingers back is a very aggressive on-the-ground effort to track them and either take them back or buy them back."

Analyst Jim Phillips of the right-wing Heritage Foundation's "Think-Tank" has suggested the United States pay \$50,000 for each missile launcher it recovers from the rebels — roughly what it would cost to buy a new one.

The administration is understood to have considered various ways to get the rebels to cooperation on the Stinger issue.

These are said to include encouraging Pakistan to cut off remaining military aid to the rebels and having Pakistan and other patrons like Saudi Arabia pressure them diplomatically.

Marine colonel W. Richard Higgins, a United Nations truce observer in southern Lebanon, reported killed by his captors in 1989, and Peter Kilburn, librarian of the American University of Beirut (AUB), found slain by kidnappers in 1986.

Former hostage Joseph Cicippio, 61, who like the other had been held by extremists recited a passage from the Koran.

"Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, Owner of the day of Judgment, these alone we worship. These alone we ask for help. Show us the straight path of those who thou hast guided and not those who earned thy anger or those who go astray."

After the service, Mr. Weir said the ceremony symbolised the effort "not to seek retribution, but to find ways to make peace."

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Qadhafi sends message to Fahd

CAIRO (AP) — Libya leader Muammar Qadhafi on Saturday sent a message to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia through diplomatic channels, the Libyan news agency JANA reported. Contents of the message were not divulged but it presumably dealt with diplomatic efforts by Arab leaders to find a way out for Libya's standoff with the West. Meanwhile, Ali Tleiki, Libya's permanent representative to the Arab League, met in Cairo with Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr Musa on the same subject Saturday. Following the Cairo meeting, Mr. Tleiki said the talks were a continuation of the efforts to reach a settlement. The U.N. Security Council on April 15 imposed air travel, arms sales and diplomatic sanctions on Libya to force her to turn over two suspects wanted for the 1988 in the United States or Britain for alleged involvement in the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. Libya offered to surrender the suspects to a third neutral country but its proposal was rejected by the West.

Iran opens congress on Khomeini thought

NICOSIA (R) — Iran opened a congress on the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's economic thought, the official news agency IRNA said on Sunday. Ahmad Khomeini, son of the Iranian spiritual leader who died three years ago this week, said in an opening speech: "The imam's (Ayatollah Khomeini's) economic thoughts will help find proper solutions to economic bottlenecks presently facing society." The three-day conference, which opened on Saturday, has been organised by the Institute for the Compilation and Publication of the works of Imam Khomeini. IRNA said Iranian scientists and economists were attending.

Paper reports Serb-Iraqi weapons link

LONDON (AP) — A rocket launcher used by Serbian forces to blast Sarajevo was designed and built with Iraqi financing, a newspaper said. Citing Western intelligence sources, the Observer said the M-87 Orkan first appeared in Iraq in 1988, and was "part of the covert arms trade" between Belgrade and the Iraqi government. According to the authoritative "Iraqi Armour and Artillery" handbook, the launcher is a joint Iraqi-Yugoslav venture. It can fire cluster bombs or small anti-armour mines, Jané's said. No one was immediately available at the Yugoslav embassy for comment. Radio reports said a barrage of rockets and shells fired by Serb-led forces on Sarajevo this week left the city strewn with corpses. The U.N. Security Council voted Saturday to impose sweeping economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, the republics that remain in Yugoslavia. The Belgrade government is blamed for bloody ethnic fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which has declared itself independent. At least 2,200 people have been killed in fighting in Bosnia.

Egypt to withdraw ambassador to Belgrade

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt has decided to withdraw its ambassador from Belgrade to protest Serbia's "hostile actions" against Bosnia and its Muslim majority, a Foreign Ministry statement said Saturday. It said Egypt's Ambassador to Belgrade Hassan Hussein Hassouna was instructed to inform Serbia's authorities that he would be leaving "as soon as possible." Egypt had delayed its decision for several days to allow Serbian-dominated Yugoslavia to fulfill its pledges and withdraw forces from Bosnia-Herzegovina. But the continuation of the bombing and killing required immediate action, the statement said.

Cargo boat sinks in Red Sea

SUEZ (AP) — A small Egyptian cargo boat carrying vegetables to Saudi Arabia sank in the Red Sea Saturday and three of its crew were missing, a Suez Port official said. The official said that three crew members were saved by a passing ship while search was continuing for missing three. The official identified the sunken boat as the Yasmine. He said it went down in the Red Sea near the port of Shokart, 300 kilometres southeast of Cairo.

Food shipment arrive in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (R) — Food prices in the Somali capital have fallen sharply since shipments of food aid were landed at the newly-reopened port here. Mogadishu port was opened to aid shipments earlier this month — for the first time in six months following agreement between rival military groups and the United Nations delegation to ease the hardships of the starving civilians here. Aid workers here said the price of rice in the market had fallen by 300 per cent within three days of aid shipments being offloaded. Gunfire still echoes round this city, in ruins after months of fighting between armed groups supporting interim Somali President Ali Mahdi Muhammad or his main rival, United Somali Congress (USC) leader Mohammed Farah Aided. Mr. Ali Mahdi holds a small area of Northern Mogadishu, but his residence was broken into and partly looted earlier this week by lawless gangs.

Five militants wounded in southern Egypt

ASSIUT, Egypt (R) — Unidentified gunmen shot and wounded five Muslim fundamentalists in southern Egypt, apparently in revenge for an attack on a man on walking with his girlfriend, security sources said on Sunday. The gunmen, who were hiding in a park, opened fire on the fundamentalists on Saturday during a row outside a mosque in the town of Manfalut, 300 kilometres south of Cairo, they said. Four of the five were seriously wounded. The gunmen fled and the police, called to the scene earlier after a report that residents had stopped the fundamentalists entering the mosque, did not make any arrests.

Indian minister winds up Bahrain visit

BAHRAIN (AP) — Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Eduard Faleiro on Sunday wound up a three-day goodwill visit during which he conveyed an invitation to the emir, Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, to visit New Delhi. The minister left for Qatar, and will also visit Oman, as part of post-Gulf war efforts by New Delhi to restore warmth to relations slightly strained during that crisis because of India's cautious approach to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Indian officials also have met with officials from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates in the past few months.

Opposition says Kuwaiti regime using wealth to distort elections

By Sarah Gauth
The Washington Post

KUWAIT CITY — Opposition politicians claim the government is using its power and wealth to distort the electoral process and thus undermine an attempt to foster democracy in the desert kingdom.

The charges, by oppositionists who won both legitimacy and popularity during the Gulf war, come as Kuwaitis prepare to elect a new National Assembly in October.

The last assembly was dismissed by the emir, Sheikh Jaber Ahmad Al Sabah, in 1986.

Hundreds of people already have announced their candidacy, many from a loose coalition of seven opposition groups that includes Islamic fundamentalists, nationalists and merchants.

Although they have little else in common, all agree that constitutional government must be restored. They are demanding fair elections, free of media manipulation and pro-government vote-buying.

In addition, all are critical of the government, which is dominated by the emir and his family.

"This is not the right way to run the country," said Abdullah Nibari, the secretary-general of the opposition National Democratic Forum.

"There is nepotism, corruption. They have become a weak and incompetent administration. You will hardly find one Kuwaiti

who is satisfied with how things are run today."

Opposition politicians object that the government has flatly rejected their requests to have international observers monitor the elections. They say it is resorting to strong-arm tactics like those used before the Gulf war.

Last week, the government blocked plans for a seminar on how to organise for elections that was to have been conducted by local professionals with help from a U.S. institute aligned with the Republican Party.

It was the emirate's first such action since it was liberated from seven months of Iraqi occupation in 1991, according to the Reuters news agency.

Kuwaitis are asking how they can have free and fair election process if they are not allowed to meet and talk about the process," said Margaret Thompson, vice president for programmes of the International Republican Institute (IRI) in Washington.

"Any time the government denies permission for them to publicly talk about it... it makes the Kuwaiti people question the intent of the government," added Mrs. Thompson, one of three IRI delegates who went to Kuwait for the seminar.

The IRI is a non-profit organisation funded by Congress and politically aligned with the Republican Party.

The Sabah family promised democratic reforms at an October

1990 conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. At the time, Kuwait was occupied by Iraq. Kuwaiti rulers were in exile and U.S.-led forces were assembling for the 1991 assault to liberate Kuwait.

Only men 21 years and older who can trace their Kuwait roots back to 1920 will be able to vote. That represents about 14 per cent of a population of less than two million.

As a result, campaigning is quite personalised. Candidates meet the electorate in diwanis, or discussion groups, in the homes of prominent citizens.

Unlike in the past, when dissent against the royal family was punished with jail terms, Kuwaitis are more or less free to speak their minds. But the government is not shy about using its money to retain influence.

Services and favours to constituents of pro-government candidates are being provided, according to the Western diplomats.

The opposition also accuses the administration of giving pro-government candidates money to bribe the electorate. Government officials deny the allegations.

Despite such efforts, however, opposition groups last week won 23 of 24 seats on the board of the nation's leading business group, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry. About 11,500 Kuwaiti businessmen voted in the contest, which was considered a major indicator of opposition strength before the elections.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 The Monde Sous Marin de Jacques-Yves Cousteau

19:00 News in French

19:15 Weekly Sports Magazine

19:30 News in Hebrew

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 Empty Nest

21:00 Capital City

22:00 News in English

22:30 Gold

PRAYER TIMES

03:53 Sunrise

05:26 Sunrise (Summer)

12:33 Dhuhr

16:14 Asr

19:40 Maghrib

21:13 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedisch, Tel. 610740

Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 625453

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 611255

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623554, 624922

Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be fair and some clouds will appear at various altitudes. Winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 16/27

Aqaba 22/33

Deserts 16/30

Jordan Valley 19/31

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 34 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Rami Mizawi 874798

Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846070

Dr. Nidal Issa 691011

Dr. Joseph Imish 770561

Firas pharmacy 661912

Fedrows pharmacy 783336

Al Astem pharmacy 637055

Natrouk pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 626730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Sunshine pharmacy 637691

AMMAN:

Dr. Muhammad Saeed 623101

Al Shamsa pharmacy 273525

ZARQA:

Dr. Farah Agrabawi 773111

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Home News



PRINCESS BASMA OPENS HALL — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday opened the Hasmite Hall at Al Hussein Estate Secondary School for Girls. The hall includes documents and pictures showing the achievements of the Hashemite since the onset of the Great Arab Revolt in 1916 and the establishment by the Late King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein of Trans-Jordan Emirate. The hall, which officially opened by marking Jordan's Independence Day, also includes wings representing the development of the Jordanian Armed Forces and Equipping them with the latest military equipment. The hall is decorated by pictures of His Majesty King Hussein and members of the Hashemite family. Attending the inauguration ceremony was Ministry of Education Secretary-General Muntaser Al Masri and senior Ministry of Education officials.

Foreign ministers of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine to hold meeting in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — Amman will this week play host to an Arab meeting attended by the foreign ministers of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine to make an assessment of the Arab side's participation in and the outcome of the peace process with Israel to date.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Sunday that the two-day meeting will be dedicated to evaluating the results of the previous rounds of bilateral negotiations in Washington and the circumstances that surround and the obstacles that impede the peace process as a whole in light of the current situation.

It said that the foreign ministers will make a general assessment of the peace process from the opening Madrid session until the end of the fifth round of negotiations held recently in Washington. Petra noted that the

foreign ministers will discuss in depth the future negotiation sessions, means to deal with the various topics on the agenda and the date of the sixth round, in addition to means of further promoting coordination among the four parties with a view to reaching more understanding and fusing more cooperation in different issues on the agenda.

The four sides who open their meetings in Amman Wednesday last met in Indonesia on the sidelines of a non-aligned countries foreign ministers' meeting.

Earlier, the four ministers, Kamel Abu Jaber of Jordan, Fares Bweiz of Lebanon, Farouk Al Sharaa of Syria and Farouk Kaddoumi head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's Political Department, held a meeting in Beirut last month in a bid to coordinate their countries' position vis-a-vis the peace process.



KING VISITS COMPUTER EXHIBITION — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday visited the fifth annual exhibition of Apple Computers held by the Ideal Systems Company at the Amman Marriott Hotel and inspected the various range of computers on display. Accompanied by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Chief of the Royal Court Khaled Al Karaki, the King was briefed on the types of computers and the training courses the Ideal Systems Company has been organising to train Jordanian in their use. Taking part in the exhibition, which opened last Wednesday and ended Sunday, were a number of firms from Jordan and Arab countries as well as France and England. At the opening of the exhibition, named "Expo '92," the Apple Computer agents organised a press conference at the hotel to outline the company's services in Arab markets. Jack Shammus, the company's Middle East regional executive manager, said that a new Apple Computer centre will soon be established in Jordan and the company will market computer sets at reduced prices. Before visiting the Apple Computer exhibition, King Hussein called at the Prime Ministry where he held a meeting with the prime minister and chief of the Royal Court.

Health minister attends conference on cancer

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh left for Damascus Sunday to take part in the opening ceremony of an international conference on cancer due to open there today.

A large number of world specialists in cancer diseases including Jordanian specialists, are taking part in the three-day conference.

The meeting in Damascus coincides with the termination of an annual meeting there by the Board of Directors of the joint Jordanian-Syrian Industry Company. The board reviewed a general plan for 1992 and studied closing accounts of the company's 1991 operations.

The board members also reviewed progress in a joint Syrian-Jordanian carpet factory in Sweida, in southern Syria, and discussed the pesticides project undertaken by the company as well as the joint "white cement" scheme. Marketing of these projects' products in the Arab world was the main topic on the agenda.

The wall-to-wall carpet factory in Sweida produces up to 1.5 million square metres of carpets annually and its high-quality products are expected to meet all the needs of the Jordanian and Syrian markets, leaving surpluses for export, company sources said.

Syrian Minister of Industry Antoine Jubran, who chaired the board meeting, voiced appreciation to the board for its endeavours to promote Arab economic integration.

Jordan holds exhibit in Iceland's festival of arts

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein, the exhibition "2000 Years of Colour Splendours — Costumes and Mosaics from Jordan and Palestine" was inaugurated in the capital of Iceland Saturday.

Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Ibn Al Hussein and Princess Alia Al Faisal deputised for the Queen at the inauguration ceremony.

In an address, Prince Faisal voiced Jordan's appreciation of Iceland's invitation to participate in its capital's festival of arts this year.

Noting that cultural activities tend to bolster ties of friendship and understanding among nations, the Prince said that the culture and civilisation of Jordan and Palestine date back to thousands of years.

Prince Faisal also dwelt in his address on the endeavours which Jordan has been making in the international arena towards supporting socio-economic development for its people.

Present at the inauguration ceremony were Jordan's ambassador to Iceland and Iceland's minister of culture, among other dignitaries and invited guests.

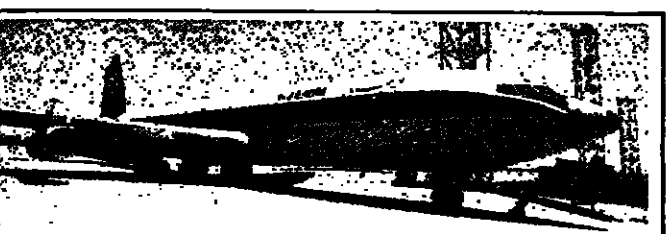
The exhibition is considered the National Gallery of Iceland's contribution this year to the biennial Reykjavik Festival of Arts which opened in the city Saturday.

President of Iceland Vigdís Finnbogadóttir is the patron of the art festival.

The exhibition comprises a set of items based on Widad Kavar's collection "Folk Dresses and Jewellery of Jordan and Palestine" and a collection of Byzantine mosaics belonging to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities selected and arranged by Father Michael Piccerello of the Franciscan Archaeological Institute at Mount Nebo near Madaba.

The exhibition will be on show at the National Art Gallery of Iceland until the beginning of August.

The Jordanian exhibition in Reykjavik marks the first cultural exchange to be held between Iceland and an Arab country.



ALYEMDA TO FLY HERE: Alyemda, a national airline of Yemen, will make its virgin trip to Amman, and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in cooperation with Royal Jordanian (RJ), the national airline, have prepared a ceremony to be held at the Queen Alia International Airport to mark the occasion and welcome the Yemeni delegation on board. A statement by RJ said Sunday that Alyemda will be making two weekly regular flights between Aden and Amman on Mondays and Fridays. The statement said that the new route will further bolster brotherly ties between the Jordanian and Yemeni peoples. Aden is the economic capital of Yemen, and the launch will be the first direct route of its kind between the two countries, the statement added. In its statement, RJ announced that it will inaugurate its own route to Aden as of July 7, 1992 by launching one weekly flight between Amman and Aden on Tuesdays.

SCANCLUB JORDAN

TO ALL SCANCLUB MEMBERS AND THOSE INTERESTED

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING, FOLLOWED BY A RECEPTION AT MARRIOTT HOTEL ON JUNE 2ND 1992 STARTING AT 7.00 PM (SHARP) TO 9.00 PM.

Medical organisation begins aid campaign for Bosnians

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Jordanian Green Crescent, a medical organisation founded by members of the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood, has begun a campaign to collect medicines, medical equipment and donations to help relieve the suffering of Bosnian civilians caught in the war between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia.

"We are gathering all that anyone can give to relieve the suffering of the people in the area — in particular our co-religionists who are under attack," the group's coordinator, Saad Salem, told the Jordan Times Sunday.

The campaign, which began May 28, is the contribution by the newly-founded Jordanian society to help civilians in the war-stricken region, Mr. Salem said.

While the organisation has worked only within Jordanian boundaries since it was founded two years ago, the organisers say Bosnia is a case that needs special attention. "Muslims should feel for their brothers," said another organiser, Saad Jaser.

Asked if they plan to conduct a similar drive to help out starving Somalis, the organisers said they were not in a position to do so.

"In Bosnia it is easier to get to the people and it is clear who the enemy of the people is," Mr. Salem said. "In Somalia that is not the case; we fear our help may fall into the wrong hands there."

During Friday sermons and in comments in the local Arabic press members of the Muslim Brotherhood have frequently portrayed the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a religious conflict between Christian Serbs and Muslim Bosnians.

Brotherhood supporters say that in times of such conflict Muslims must stand by their brethren to protect them. "It is a religious conflict in Bosnia and so we must help them," said university student Ahmad Abu Zeid, a supporter of the Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood has not been able to explain why the United States has chosen to go ahead with imposing sanctions on Serbia over the Bosnian conflict although it remained uncommitted during the Serbia attack on

"Christian Croatia."

"This I cannot explain," said Maha Abu Yusef, a female supporter of the Brotherhood. "All I know is that the Bosnians are Muslims and that they are under attack and we must help them."

The involvement of the Green Crescent in the humanitarian gesture will be welcomed in Bosnia, said Mahmoud Bushnaq, a Jordanian-Bosnian heretic. "Regardless of their political message — help is help and people in Bosnia need help."

Although relatively young as a society, the Green Crescent has already participated in a number of humanitarian missions within Jordan, members explained. Founded in the fall of 1990, the organisation's main objective is to help the needy. The organisation's founding principles are based on the same basic principles as the Red Crescent Society, which belongs to the International League of Red Crescent and Red Cross Societies.

The Green Crescent was founded as a separate organisation in response to the needs of mostly Asian transients through Jordan after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

The society was registered and founded by 20 people, seven of whom are members of the Muslim Brotherhood bloc in the Lower House of Parliament.

The religious tinge to the organisation, says Mr. Salem, is not implicitly sectarian. "In the Gulf crisis we help the non-Muslim before the Muslim as it is prescribed in the Koran," he said.

Although run by only two people in its Amman headquarters, the organisation has already helped out in 18 emergency cases since its foundation.

Poverty-stricken areas in the southern regions around Tafleh and Madaba were both targets of the Green Crescent for emergency operations during the Gulf crisis, Mr. Salem explained.

Currently the Green Crescent is setting up their first long-term project, a mini health centre in the Wadi Musa region which will be run by three medical employees.

The organisation hopes to have more active donors soon and expects to gather two to three tonnes of medicine within the next two weeks for the people in Bosnia.

Senators assails media for 'pursuing ideological forms' and 'treating realities with images'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The media Sunday came under fierce attack by a prominent Jordanian senator.

In a rare column published in Al Dustour Arab daily, Upper House of Parliament Senator Munther Rashid included in his attack the press, radio and Jordan Television.

"Many of our writers are still pursuing ideological forms that could fit the 1950s but have no relation to our present day national and political ambitions," Mr. Rashid, a former chief of the Intelligence Department, wrote.

He said that every citizen had expected the media to lift off with the ushering in of the new phase of democracy but instead "we see a continuous media regression camouflaged with claims of progress."

Mr. Rashid slammed Radio

Jordan for broadcasting music and songs that "have no colour or identity," he said.

"Radio programmes are being run through the station's switchboard," Mr. Rashid said, referring to a popular phone-in programme that had been increasingly criticised by intellectuals for being so lax and for encouraging people to throw the problems at government doors.

"Even radio news are just readings that lack analysis and background," he said. "That," he said, "compels people to switch to other stations in the region to satisfy their need for information."

As for JTV, Mr. Rashid said that most of TV talk shows did not qualify even as "radio talk shows. Local series are a shock. They treat Jordan reality with

images and personalities that are far from the country and its people," he said.

Mr. Rashid, however, reserved most of his attack to the print media.

"The press has false priorities that overwhelm national (Jordanian) priorities," he said. "The press still gives unjustified prominence to people whose only patriotic capital was their animosity to the regime and state of Jordan. Progressiveness in our press is only bestowed on those who are members in non-Jordanian parties."

He said that the press was still promoting defunct political parties that failed in their own countries. "We do not want to hear the voice of promoters of extinct ideologies; we want for new voices for the new democratic times," he said.

He said that certain personalities, otherwise unheard of in Jordan, are being pumped while national trends rarely get even a brief news item in the press.

He wronged writers and columnists for continuing the stand which the country and leadership took during the Gulf crisis.

"Why should some of our writers insist on perpetuating the state of misunderstanding between Jordan and Saudi Arabia?" he asked, and then answered "This stand is not based on proper consideration of Jordan's national interests or the country's abilities."

Mr. Rashid concluded by calling for a new press that would pursue the truth whenever it is; a press that does not "salt in the echo of dreams and imagination and writes its impressions from behind the desks."

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Cabinet endorses projects

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Saturday endorsed the regulation of the Revolving Fund for low-income people. The fund will enable the Housing and Urban Development Corporation to finance housing projects for people with low income through the finance loan for the second urban development project. The Cabinet, also endorsed a loan agreement concluded between the University of Jordan and the Jeddah-based Islamic Bank for Development. Under the loan, the university will buy four million Islamic dinars worth of equipment for the Cancer Centre. The Cabinet authorised the Jordanian ambassador in Saudi Arabia to sign the agreement. The Cabinet also approved the appointment of Mohammad Saleh Hourani as director general of the Social Security Corporation as of June 16.

Premier receives ambassador to Syria

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday received Jordan's Ambassador to Syria Nayef Al Hadid. The meeting dealt with issues related to the meeting of foreign ministers of Arab states, those participating in the Middle East peace process, which will be held in Amman Wednesday.

Minister receives Syrian ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour received Sunday the Syrian Ambassador to Jordan. The meeting discussed economic and commercial relations between Jordan and Syria and ways of promoting them.

Higher education minister calls for review

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Higher Education Awad Khleifat said that the level of education at community colleges around the Kingdom is below the required standards in regards to meeting the society's needs. At a meeting with members of the teaching staff at Amman College for Applied Engineering, Dr. Khleifat reviewed the College's recent decision, which states that workers in the colleges will be included in the universities' system as of the beginning of October. The minister described this decision as a great achievement since it treats the college on equal footing with Jordanian universities. He called for reviewing teaching methods at the college.

Ministry to open summer clubs

SALT (Petra) — The Education Ministry has decided to open four summer clubs for students at Balqa Governorate schools during the period of June 6-29. Balqa Education Department Director Mahdi Al Karnar said these clubs aim to develop the students' talents and teach them to interact and serve the local society in their leisure time.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of paintings by five Malaysian artists at the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Jabal Luwibdeh.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Ali Taleb and Rafe' Nasiri at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — (10 a.m. - 5 p.m.).
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by 40 Jordanian artists entitled "An Artist and a Painting" at Bahadra Art Gallery, Gardens Street.
- ★ Exhibition of handicrafts, gifts, leather products, scents, food and sweets at the Amman Plaza Hotel.

FILM

- ★ French film entitled "La Vie et Rien d'Autre" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.

Starting Tomorrow

COMPUTER EXPO

معرض الحاسبات والالكترونيات

From 2/6 to 4/6/1992

FM 9:30 am - 13:30 pm FM 16:30 - 21:00 pm

ROYAL CULTURAL CENTRE المركز الثقافي الملكي

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
الجزيرة النابلسية مؤسسة صحفية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Are we that desperate?

THAT 85.2 per cent of young, educated Jordanians would agree that capital punishment could stem crime in the country is baffling. First of all because crime in Jordan is not remarkably high. Second because even in countries that have a very high rate of crime, old and especially young people are calling for the abolishment of capital punishment. So why should young Jordanians sound so vicious? Perhaps the Jordan Research Centre at Yarmouk University that conducted the poll and made the findings should try to answer the question. However, we notice that the issue of capital punishment has never been debated or tackled in the country despite the fact that executions are carried out in Jordan from time to time. The government and media have always chosen to minimise reporting on crime itself, court proceedings and sentences, especially hangings. No wonder most of the 915 people polled by the Yarmouk centre showed very little faith in the court system or the laws and procedures employed to combat crime.

Also revealing is the contention by almost 90 per cent of those polled that the media (radio, TV, video and cinema) were responsible for increasing the rate of crime. In fact this has not been exclusively proved in countries where the media play a stronger role in developing individuals' attitudes. That too needs to be researched to determine its validity to our society.

We, however, are grateful for the Yarmouk centre for its attempts to find out how Jordanians and Arabs think and perceive issues.

In a poll it conducted early last month among Jordanians, Palestinians and other Arab nationals, the centre found strong feelings for Arab unity and little faith in nation-states. However that too showed a strong tendency among the Arabs for the use of force; 48 per cent of 997 Arabs polled supported the use of force for attaining Arab unity. What is comforting in that poll perhaps is the fact that 52 per cent thought Arab unity should be accomplished through democracy.

From the two polls it seems that Arabs, and Jordanians, lack a virtue much advocated in the Holy Koran and by Arab sages: patience.

Lack of patience is of course a quality acquired by both the lack of democracy and the abundance of repression that normally result in ignorance, intolerance and short temper. We hope that the democracy we are experiencing, guided by liberal-minded and genuine research as manifested in what the Yarmouk centre is doing, would lead us to more knowledge, tolerance and progress.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Sunday commented on the inauguration of projects in Jordan and the King's opening of an exhibition displaying Jordan's industrial products, noting that with determination, scientific knowledge and strong faith the Jordanian people can still achieve further progress. The opening of these projects and the display of Jordan's national industries for the benefit of the public is a means of exhibiting the Kingdom's accomplishments on its independence day anniversary, said the paper. It said that apart from industry, the country has made big and noticeable strides in agriculture, culture and other fields thanks to the wise leadership of the Kingdom, over the past few decades, and the will and resolve of the Jordanian people. There can be no chance for creativity and invention without the necessary elements of determination, faith in God and scientific knowledge, said the daily. It said that the present achievements and those to be accomplished in the future constitute a solid foundation on only for the progress of Jordan alone but that of the Arab nation at large. The paper said that the achievements are a source of pride for the Jordanian family which continues to reap the benefits of democracy.

COMMENTING ON the Earth Summit, due to open soon in Brazil, Mohammad Daoudieh, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the nations of the world attach great hopes to the summit as they watch with horror and dismay the continued depletion of the ozone which provides protection to the earth. The writer said that in the absence of ozone the earth will be transformed into a barren globe, similar to the other lifeless planets. The continued depletion of the ozone poses so great a danger to the earth that any measures to address the situation can only come through a summit of world leaders responsible for their nation's future, said the writer. Indeed, the Earth Summit remains the only hope for the human beings, not only those of the future, but also those of today who are facing the growing, said the writer. He said that the question of protecting the atmosphere is a main concern for everyone and every nation and, therefore, all possible means should be adopted by the coming summit and the nations of the world at large to deal with this dangerous situation at a time when the population of the earth continues to grow.

Weekly Political Pulse

Sow the wind and reap the whirlwind

SURELY everybody must have noticed how degrading is the sight of hundreds and hundreds of Jordanians queuing for visa applications at prime Western embassies. And this disgraceful sight is not necessarily the fault of these embassies, which simply cannot cope with the multitude of visa applicants who are forced to queue outside under sun or rain as the case may be. All that one can say, however, is that there must be a better way to handle the volume of work being dumped on foreign consulates by Jordanians driven abroad by economic despair and seeking greener pastures outside the Kingdom for some reason or another.

The panacea to this rather vexing and complex situation may very well require the pooling of resources, by the appropriate Jordanian authorities and the concerned foreign embassies to come up with a workable solution. Of course the best thing would be to combat the reasons that prompt Jordanians to seek education or employment opportunities in foreign lands. Yet, everyone knows that the economic situation in the country, while improving at a steady pace, is not quite ready to offer such easy prescriptions. So while the Kingdom seeks final solutions, interim provisions need to be made to ameliorate the sight of so many Jordanians waiting seemingly endlessly for even an opportunity to apply for a visa.

So why not expedite this phase of visa application by making visa applications for the relevant consulates readily available at other sources, including certain book stores or whatever. A second procedure that can be deployed to make the overall task of

visa-applying and visa-acquisition more tolerable is to publicise more clearly and coherently the policy guidelines for such matters. According to this rather simple procedure, people who clearly do not qualify will save themselves and the foreign consular services, much suffering and effort by simply avoiding or abstaining from going through the entire ordeal for nothing. It would be interesting to get some data on the percentage of people who apply and end up getting their cherished visa and those who do not make the score. A third way is to simply increase the staff handling the visa section. Clearly the revenues obtained from visa processing are astronomical and the concerned embassies can afford to increase their staff during peak seasons.

Jordanian authorities can neither escape unscathed from responsibility in this vein. Take for example the way we handle visa applicants from a friendly country, like Turkey. At a time when the Ministry of Tourism is trying to promote tourism and get tourists from the bottom of the pit, we ask Turkish-visa applicants for the most arduous and painstaking procedure, including having a relative or an acquaintance to first approach the Ministry of Interior and in turn the Mukabarat, to grant an approval for the applicants to honour them with a visit during which they will be expected to spend lots of their monies for tourism or business opportunities that are mutually beneficial. And I am not talking here only about labourers but also about wealthy Turkish nationals who end up queuing unnecessarily for visa processing. Many potential Turkish visitors end up giving up on their quest

for an opportunity to visit the Kingdom simply because there is no coordination between the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Tourism on such national policies. And what applies to Turkey applies also to scores of other nations. Such contradictory policy considerations often give the impression that in Jordan we do not have one government but several ones with each singing its own tune and mindless of the overall interest of the country. I ask: how can Jordan promote its tourism industry when Jordanian consulates abroad make it inexcusably difficult for visitors to pay us a visit by either disgraceful delaying tactics or bureaucratic hassle that is counterproductive.

All in all, Jordan also needs to get its act together by treating our potential visitors with more dignity and efficiency. We cannot begin to ask other nations to accord Jordanians graceful treatment as long as we handle our guests the way we do. It would be such a refreshing step if the Ministry of Interior together with the Ministries of Tourism and Foreign Affairs can get their act together and go through the existing ludicrous rules and regulations on granting visas to foreign nationals with a view to making them more up to date, efficient and productive. These concerned ministries must know that Jordan needs tourists more than tourists need Jordan and, therefore, they had better do better on this score by making visa-processing faster and sensible. Once we deal effectively with this dimension, we may begin to deal with how our nationals are being treated at the gates of foreign embassies and consulates.

Arabs still split, unable to modernise league

By Ashraf Fouad
Reuters

CAIRO — The inability of Arab states to agree on steps to modernise the 47-year-old Arab League shows how divided they stand despite a year of efforts to heal the wounds of the Gulf war. Before Iraq's August 2, 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the league had ambitious plans to amend its charter, form an Arab peace-keeping force and set up an Arab court. But inter-Arab feuding has crippled progress.

"We discussed this at the last foreign ministers' meeting (in April) ... but decided to postpone it until the Arab atmosphere is more appropriate for change," the league's Secretary-General Esmat Abdel Maguid told Reuters.

The league was born in 1945, the fruit of a secular Arab nationalism and years of struggle against western colonialism.

Several Arab officials interviewed this week said the depth of Arab differences since the Gulf war made it very difficult for members to agree on steps to modernise the group.

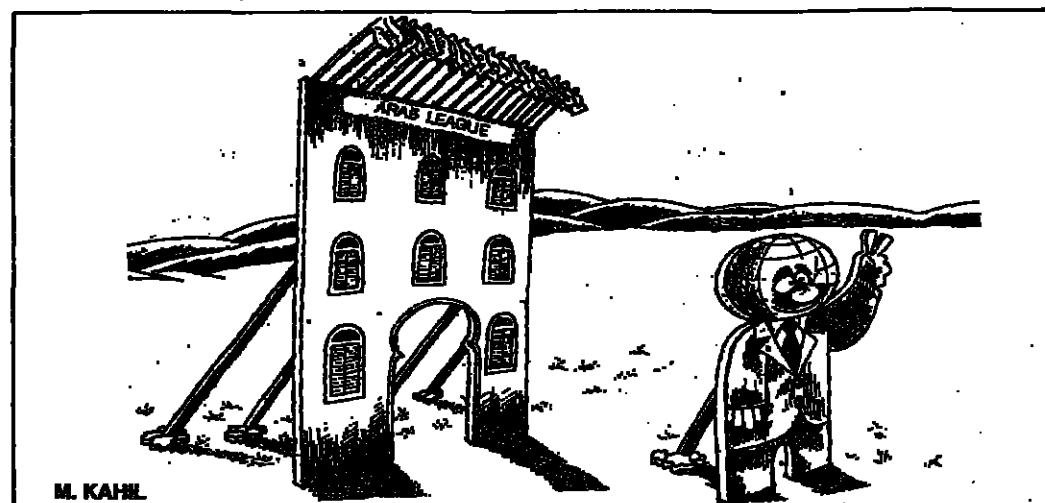
Egyptian Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nagy El Ghatrifi said the war had had "a negative effect which makes progress very difficult."

The Gulf war hit the league when it had barely recovered from a decade of division over Egypt's separate peace treaty with Israel in 1979.

Egypt, the leader of Arabism under President Gamal Abdel Nasser, was boycotted and the league headquarters moved from Cairo to Tunis.

More than 10 years later, Egypt's leading role in mobilising Arab support for the U.S.-led alliance against Iraq marked its return to the mainstream of Arab politics.

The league moved back to



Cairo in late 1990 and Egypt reclaimed its traditional hold on the secretary-general's job with Mr. Maguid's appointment in May 1991.

But the Gulf war created new, deeper divisions.

The 21 members divided into a camp led Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and five small Gulf states which supported military action to free Kuwait, and a minority

including the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Jordan and Sudan which showed varying degrees of sympathy for Iraq.

Since the war, the Gulf states have given up even mouthing pleas for Arab unity and have concentrated on building links among themselves and with the West.

They have failed to implement a security accord with Egypt and

Syria, which provided troops to free Kuwait, because they have had second thoughts about stationing forces from other Arab countries on their soil.

The biggest challenge the league has had to face since the war has frayed its tattered unity still further. In November, the United States and Britain indicted two Libyans on charges of blowing up a Pan

Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988.

Libya appealed to its Arab brothers for support which were too embarrassed to give. The league issued lukewarm statements of support but all its members obeyed a U.N. Security Council resolution imposing sanctions on Libya from April 15 after it failed to extradite the two men for trial.

Mr. Maguid, Egypt's foreign minister for seven years until he moved to the league, said one of the organisation's most positive achievements during his year in office had been a resolution last September supporting U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace talks.

Most Arab states and a Palestinian negotiating team attended a historic Middle East peace conference in Madrid the following month and are currently engaged in a series of parallel talks with Israel.

Mr. Maguid remains committed to the ideal of Arab unity. "I believe in the league and I'm a great believer in the ideology behind it," he said. "The elements which unite the Arabs are more than those which separate them."

LETTERS

Not so friendly a bank?

To the Editor:

In the morning of May 11, 1992, in Aqaba, on the last day of our circular trip in your beautiful country with very very nice people, I wanted to buy a golden necklace for my wife as a souvenir. I wanted to change Thomas Cook travellers' cheques in JD at the Arab Bank in Aqaba, to be able to pay for the jewellery. At the bank, I put my signature on the two travellers cheques in the presence of the responsible person at the exchange office. He refused to pay me out because there was a little difference between the two signatures on the cheques. So I decided to turn to the director of the same bank for help; he also refused, although I had on me my passport, my identity card, and my driving licence. He did not even check them on their authenticity. I found this behaviour an affront.

It is a rule of Islam to help every body in need. I think that the Aqaba Arab Bank director is not a true Muslim and his place is not in the Arab World.

And Jordan's tourism has a lot to lose if tourists are treated this way.

Dr. Paul Vermeulen,
Dampoortstraat, 26,
8310 Brugge, Belgium.

Help stop the crimes

To the Editor:

I wish to draw attention to the fact that in Bosnia and Herzegovina Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and his army are conducting a systematic campaign of genocide against Muslims by torture, rape and kill. Each day we can witness on Jordanian TV the misery of the Muslim population being driven away from their homes and land into the neighbouring countries. We see many mosques and houses deliberately destroyed by Serbian murderers. It is a barbaric act of deeply-rooted hatred which has always been a part of the Serbian character, who can only accept their church, their religion, their way of life.

Given the above situation, the international community should demonstrate greater willingness to treat the demons in Belgrade with the contempt they deserve. Bland statements and cosmetic solutions are not the answer to Belgrade's brutality. One must appreciate that a great deal is at stake and unless serious efforts are made to defeat the Serbian move, the repercussions may well spill over into neighbouring Greece, Bulgaria or Albania.

For all we know, from the detritus of the Yugoslav civil war may emerge a greater Serbia with all the trappings of a reinvigorated Stalinistic regime. Can the Western world and OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) afford to roll back all the changes that have been achieved during the last few years?

I say "no" and therefore, I suggest that a tough international diplomatic action, accompanied by trade, air, road and sea embargo be introduced to show the people in Belgrade that the international community will not tolerate their bloody aggression against innocent people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Safet Ganic,
P.O. Box 5227,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

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Pilgrims, workers, tourists mix on Jordan-Egypt ferry

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AQABA, JORDAN — Egyptian labourers, robed pilgrims bound for Mecca and tourists in shorts mingle aboard a unique sea link between Jordan and Egypt.

Twice a day up to 1,500 people squeeze onto a multi-decker ferry for the three-hour voyage of 66 miles between Jordan's Red Sea Port of Aqaba and Egypt's Nuweiba harbour on the Sinai Peninsula.

"God keep this great service," said Egyptian office boy Mohamed Hassan, 27, recalling how it used to take him three days by ship and one by road to get to his home near the Suez Canal from the Saudi Arabian port of Jeddah.

"Now it takes less than half that time," he said on board the Jimmy, a Panamanian-registered ship, before loudspeakers blared the voice of a muezzin calling Muslims to prayer.

"And on top of that, you can take all the luggage you want without paying extra charges," said his compatriot Bashar Samarah, a baker, hugging a radio blaring Arabic music.

Many officials believe the sea link, started in 1988, could lose its importance if Arab-Israeli peace talks bring about the reopening of land borders between Jordan and Israel, sealed since the start of the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948.

But meanwhile the ferry fills an important gap for millions of people living in the Arab Mashreq and Maghreb. It has boosted trade, especially between Egypt and Iraq before the 1990-1991 Gulf war. With fares of 13 to 18

dollars, it has cut the price of travel.

Its operators, the Arab bridge Maritime Company, owned by the governments of Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, have kept the partnership going despite strains of the Gulf war and have plans to expand.

"It certainly is a very successful and profitable project," said Akram Joura, an Iraqi, who is deputy director for technical and commercial affairs.

"The proof is that more and more passengers are using us," he told Reuters in his Aqaba office, decked with Jordanian, Iraqi and Egyptian flags.

In 1991, a total of 867,883 passengers travelled with the company, up by 34 per cent from 1989, officials said. Over the same period, net profit, helped

by leasing ships and other cost-cutting measures, soared more than six-fold to \$3.6 million.

"We expect to show even more impressive results this year," Mr. Joura said, adding that 279,000 passengers used the service in the first quarter alone.

The company has two leased ships, each with capacity for 1,500 passengers and 200 cars, and hopes to have at least two more within three years. It has another leased ship to transport cargo trucks.

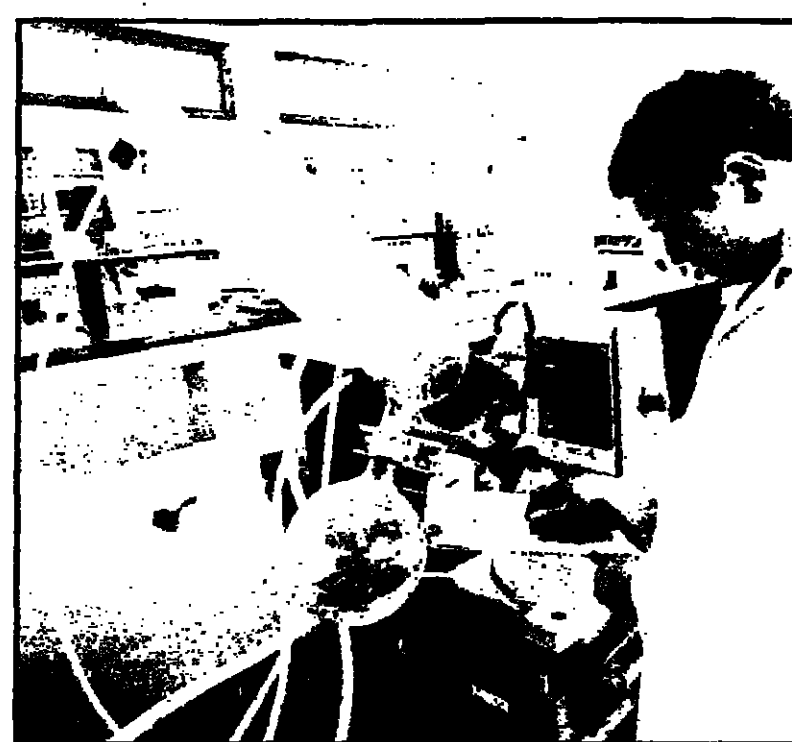
Standards of service are not those of a luxury cruise ship, but meet the needs of regular passengers and adventure seekers.

Typical passengers on a recent trip included a dozen German backpackers, basking in the sun as the Jimmy plied the Gulf of Aqaba.

Beside them, labourers sat chatting on the deck in small circles, excited to be going home and comparing last-minute gifts bought from the ship's duty-free shop.

Sitting below in air-conditioned salons were about 100 elderly men and women returning to Tunisia after performing the Muslim pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia's holy shrines of Mecca and Medina.

Jordan and Egypt have built huge, modern ferry terminals. But many passengers complain of bureaucratic hold-ups, especially on the Egyptian side at Nuweiba where police search luggage for taxable goods. Passengers travelling with cars spend luggage for taxable goods. Passengers travelling with cars spend hours over paperwork.



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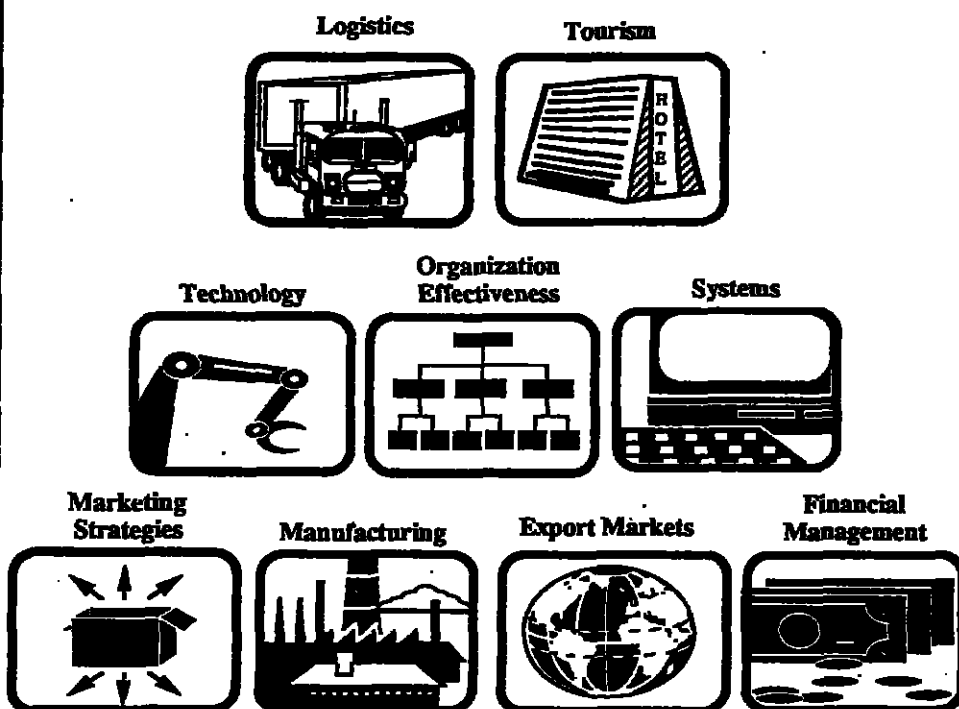
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85% favour death penalty

(Continued from page 1)

Research Centre and released yesterday.

Out of 997 people polled 68 per cent believed Arab unity will really materialise while 32 per cent thought otherwise. No time scale was given. The sample, according to the Jordan research centre, was made of Jordanians (40 per cent), Palestinians (21 per cent), Syrians (13 per cent), Iraqis (8 per cent), Egyptians (7 per cent), Omanis (6 per cent), Yemenis (4 per cent), Lebanese (1 per cent) and Moroccans (1 per cent). The sample was made of 78.6 per cent males.

The sample was mainly made of educated people with an average education of 16 years.

Of those polled 98 per cent said they favoured Arab unity and the rest said they did not. Asked if they thought Arab cooperation blocs were a substitute to Arab unity only five per cent said they thought so while 95 per cent believed no. Likewise only 5 per cent said they thought the Arab League would be a substitute for Arab unity while 92 per cent did not think so.

Only 3 per cent thought that Arab unity was possible under the "new world order," 95 per cent did not think so and 2 per cent said they did not know.

Asked if they thought Muslim fundamentalism would be an obstacle to Arab unity, 16.5 per cent of the respondents said yes while 83.5 said no.

In contrast, 85.1 per cent thought Arab national parties were repelling factors among Arabs and 14.9 per cent thought they were factors of attraction. Asked if they thought Arab nation-states were capable of facing dangers that threaten their existence, 6 per cent said yes and 94 per cent said no.

Asked to mark on a scale of ten the sources of danger to the nation-state, the average response of the sample was as follows:

- Israeli military invasion or conflicts instigated by Israel (7.8)
- Western military invasion or conflicts instigated by the West (7.9)
- Seizure of water and energy resources (7.9)
- Economic embargo of food and arms (6.4)
- Social upheaval (class struggle) (7.0)
- Indebtedness (7.1)
- Political and economic groupings (6.9)

Bekaa

(Continued from page 1)

were out of their houses when the helicopters struck. They said a neighbour of Mr. Yaseen's suffered shrapnel wounds. Another passerby was slightly wounded in Majdal Sili.

Israeli gunners shelled Lebanese villages overnight and on Sunday afternoon after guerrillas attacked a position on the edge of Israel's "security zone" in the south on Saturday. Shells hit a government hospital in the village of Tibnine.

Israelis restate hardline position

(Continued from page 1)

series of generals who rose to fame in the 1967 war, Likud took 100 buses of supporters on a tour of satellite neighbourhoods to show its success in increasing Jerusalem's Jewish population.

Israel has methodically encircled the Arab area of the city with Jewish housing, while blocking new housing for Jerusalem's 150,000 Arabs. About 135,000 of city's Jewish population of 380,000 live on land occupied in 1967.

Mr. Sharon ceremoniously nailed a Jewish talisman to the door of a house in the Muslim quarter of the Old City and declared, "There will not be one neighbourhood in Jerusalem without Jews in it."

Mr. Sharon has encouraged Jews to settle in the Muslim quarter, overriding the objections of the Israeli mayor, Teddy Kollek, that their presence heightens tensions. Mr. Sharon called the settlers "the real heroes of Jerusalem."

Mr. Kollek urged tolerance towards the Arabs. "I think our sovereignty over this city will be proven by the way we treat minorities," he told Israel Television.

Police blocked a handful of Jewish extremists accompanied by an accordionist from holding prayers at Haram Al Sharif.

Two dozen Arabs and left-wing Israelis protested Israel's policies toward Jerusalem's Arabs. Gathering in Silwan, another Arab district where Jews have settled, they waved placards that said: "There is no coexistence under occupation."

"I am sorry seeing all these Israeli flags," said Mohammad Sirhan, 65, of Silwan. "This is Arab land, Palestinian land and we want to see our own flag here."

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Financial Markets
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Foreign Exchange Market Summary May 25 — May 29, 1992

AMMAN — Dollar exchange rates posted sharp movements during the course of last week, touching 1,639.5 marks as oil prices soared at mid-week, only to drop to 1,608 marks and 127.60 yen at the end of the week on Bank of Japan intervention. The interest rate differential in favour of other currencies remained a destabilising factor for the dollar. It thus ended the week an average of 0.6 per cent lower against European currencies and 1.3 per cent lower against the yen.

As New York and London closed on official holiday Monday, trading remained range-bound and activity subdued on other major centres. A stream of dollar-supportive news Tuesday only managed to help the U.S. dollar marginally, as it still ended weaker against European currencies. U.S. prices soared to a six-month high on concerns that OPEC may finally reach agreement on limiting supply. Observers maintained that the six per cent interest rate differential continued to haunt traders and thus pressure the dollar, however.

But as the effect of the news filtered through, and speculation about the future of oil prices intensified, bouts of dollar short-covering materialised in the Far East and other centres Wednesday, boosting the dollar sharply. With the new possibility of a rise in inflation, should oil prices continue to surge, previous expectations of a possible Fed interest rate cut subsided. Traders commented that mark weakness in the crosses also reflected favourably on the dollar, which ended in New York at its highest closing levels of the week at 1,637.0 marks to the dollar, 1,794.9 dollars to the pound sterling and 129.50 yen.

The U.S. unit declined sharply by the end of the week, however, losing ground initially Thursday on disappointing U.S. weekly money supply figures. The weekly U.S. M-2 money supply were reported to have declined by \$7.4 billion compared to expectations of a \$3.7 billion decline, thus indicating an annualised growth rate of 2.3 per cent. The Fed target range, on the other hand, stands at 2.5 per cent to 6.5 per cent.

The dollar then declined further, mainly against the yen, on aggressive Bank of Japan intervention the following day. Observers commented that unlike previous times, the Bank of Japan intervention in favour of the yen was orchestrated to come at a time when dollar sentiment had been "vulnerable" in the wake of Thursday's weak economic data and the accumulated long positions in the market. The intervention, thus, ignited several waves of stop-loss selling, taking the dollar to its lowest closing levels of the week.

The mark also retreated against the yen and other European currencies, closing at 79.35 yen and 2,940.2 marks to the pound sterling compared to 80 yen and 2,932.9 marks to the pound the previous week. Expectations concerning the near-term direction of the dollar remain mixed. A number of reports however suggest Japanese officials intend to limit the dollar below 128 yen, and specifically to a 123-124 yen as a medium term target-range.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	22.5.92 Close	29.5.92 Close	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.8155	1.8285	0.72 %
Deutsche Mark	1.6155	1.6080	0.47 %
Swiss Franc	1.4860	1.4570	2.00 %
French Franc	5.4325	5.4015	0.60 %
Japanese Yen	129.85	127.60	1.30 %

USD Per STG

Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	22.5.1992 1-Month (%)	29.5.1992 1-Month (%)	22.5.1992 1-Year (%)	29.5.1992 1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	3.93	4.31	3.81	4.59
Sterling Pound	9.81	9.81	10.00	9.87
Deutsche Mark	9.50	9.43	9.68	9.56
Swiss Franc	8.93	8.62	9.37	9.68
French Franc	9.78	9.69	9.87	9.75
Japanese Yen	4.75	4.62	4.75	4.59

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6780	0.6800
Sterling Pound	1.2381	1.2443
Deutsche Mark	0.4212	0.4233
Swiss Franc	0.4653	0.4676
French Franc	0.1255	0.1261
Japanese Yen	0.5306	0.5333
Dutch Guilder	0.3740	0.3759
Swedish Krona	0.1170	0.1176
Italian Lira	0.0589	0.0562
Belgian Franc	0.02047	0.02057

Per 100

Japanese cities remain world's most expensive

Geneva (AP) — The Japanese cities of Tokyo and Osaka remain by far the most expensive cities in dollar terms, according to a survey.

With New York as a base of 100, Tokyo had an index of 174 and Osaka 162. The Libyan capital Tripoli followed on 146. Harare in Zimbabwe was the cheapest city for expatriates with a rate of only 62.

The survey of 98 cities is published twice a year by a Geneva-based private consultancy, Corporate Resources Group. It is based on a basket of 151 products including food, clothing and transport, but not accommodation.

The cost of living in most western European countries was higher than in the United States, though eastern European ones remained good value, it said. Stockholm had an index of 136, making it the fourth most expensive city overall. The Norwegian capital Oslo followed on 135.

Moscow ranked 13th overall with an index of 122. The consultancy's spokesman Carlos Mestre said the price of goods used in the sample was based on hard currency stores and restaurants used by many foreigners.

Buenos Aires was the most expensive place in the Americas, with a rating of 114. Peru's Lima had an index of 109. All other cities in north and south America were cheaper than New York, with Ecuador's Quito representing the best dollar value at 64.

In Asia, the Taiwanese capital Taipei, with a ranking of 129, was the costliest after the two Japanese cities. Beijing followed with 117.

Some African cities, such as Tripoli, Libreville in Gabon and Brazzaville in Congo were high on the list mainly because of the exchange rates used against the dollar, spokesman Mestre said. The index was based on mid-March exchange rates.

Delors presses Athens to meet economic targets

ATHENS (R) — European Community (EC) Commission President Jacques Delors has told Greece it had to work harder to meet EC economic targets.

Mr. Delors, addressing the annual meeting of the Federation of Greek Industries, said the Athens government was an exception in the Community in failing to honour commitments and alter economic structures.

"We must both look at our future differently, because the line which we are following today leads nowhere," Mr. Delors said. "On the part of the Community it brings scepticism and for Greek public opinion it prompts frustration and sometimes hostility."

Mr. Delors made no specific allegations, but it was clear he was referring to the Greek government's failure to cut the public sector deficit, reduce inflation running at 16 per cent and trim bloated state bureaucracy.

He called for closer cooperation "in our discussions of Community requirements, and the political, economic and social responsibilities of Greece."

Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis acknowledged in his address to the gathering that his government had fallen behind in tackling its commitments. He renewed earlier pledges to bring Greece in line with other EC member states.

"In relation to our targets we are already late. Therefore we must intensify our efforts," he said.



Jacques Delors

said. "Political cost will not be a burden in the continuation of the work we have undertaken."

Greece contested a recent EC report which criticised its attempts to cut deficits and inflation, saying the report contained inaccurate figures.

Mr. Mitsotakis said he would not hesitate to clamp down on widespread tax evasion and reduce the number of public sector employees by 10 per cent by next year.

He said some economic indicators were beginning to improve as a result of austerity measures. Inflation fell to 16 per cent annually last month from 22.8 per cent in December 1990, but still remains the highest in the EC.

ATT signs up Russian physicists

NEW YORK (R) — American Telephone Telegraph (ATT) Co has hired the services of 100 top Russian physicists, in what some analysts called a coup, at annual salaries of \$720.

Under the pact, ATT Bell Labs scientists will collaborate with fibre optics scientists and the company will pay their wages, travel expenses and purchase some equipment.

The fibre optics scientists from the Russian Academy of Science's General Physics Institute said their top salary is 6,000 rubles or \$60 a month and ATT Bell Labs said the scientists suggested the \$720 annual salary to avoid labour conflicts with their colleagues.

At a cost of \$720 in salary yearly for each scientist, ATT Bell Labs gets world experts in material properties of optical fibres.

ATT is in effect hiring the scientists for much less than they would have to pay in salary to a U.S. scientist. ATT Bell Labs scientists doing similar work in fibre optics earn \$60,000 in starting salaries, according to Dr. Kumar Patel, Bell Labs executive director.

ATT is not the first to seize on the opportunity. Sun Microsystems contracted the services of Russian software designers and the U.S. Department of Energy also entered a research agreement with some Russian scientists.

Hours after ATT's announcement, competitor Corning Inc., based in Corning, New York, announced it had signed a contract for the services of 100 Russian scientists at Vavilov State Optical Institute in St. Petersburg.

Yugoslav economy expected to reel under U.N. sanctions

BELGRADE (R) — The U.N. sanctions on Yugoslavia are likely to have a devastating effect and could quickly bring to a standstill an economy reeling from months of war, according to Yugoslav and Western economists.

Long queues of cars stretched back from Belgrade petrol stations after the Security Council announced the sanctions Saturday, including an oil embargo. People said they feared shortages and were preparing to stock up with food.

"Some sectors of the economy will come to a complete standstill and the entire economy will be forced just to survive," Bozo Jovanovic, Yugoslav minister for foreign economic relations, said. The sanctions are the latest blow to an economy which is widely regarded as having been mismanaged for years under communist rule and has been ravaged by 11 months of ethnic fighting that has plunged it into a deep crisis.

The secession of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia in the last 11 months have stripped what remains of Yugoslavia of its internal market.

Yugoslavia's monthly inflation hit a record 80.8 per cent last month, industrial output is down by a quarter compared with a year ago and exports have crumbled.

Most economists say that although sanction-busting cannot

be ruled out, the trade and oil bans should have a huge and rapid impact if they are applied tightly.

"A Western economic blockade could have a devastating effect," said Tomislav Popovic, director of Belgrade's independent Institute for Economic Sciences.

Mr. Popovic's institute said the possible effects of sanctions could be to boost the thriving currency black market and reduce food and industrial production to subsistence level.

Economists say food production should not be an immediate problem because of Serbia's rich agricultural land. But industry's slide is likely to speed up quickly.

"It could mean the complete destruction of Yugoslavia's entire industrial fabric if the blockade lasts a long time," said Radovan Kovacevic, an expert at Belgrade's Institute for Foreign Trade.

"There will be a drastic blow to industrial production because of the cutting of imports of materials from abroad and the oil ban," Mr. Kovacevic said.

The oil embargo is expected to be the most powerful weapon. A Petroleum Intelligence Weekly special report published last year said Yugoslav oil output was 79,500 barrels per day, only 25 per cent of demand.

Gas production was almost

three billion cubic metres a year, about 40 per cent of demand, the report said.

Yugoslavia's economic crisis is partly the legacy of almost half a century of communist rule from the end of World War II until its demise in 1990 as communism collapsed across eastern Europe.

Yugoslavia long had one of the more proficient economies in eastern Europe because of its unique brand of decentralised communism and it won large loans from the West after it broke with Moscow in 1948.

Those debts are now a chain around its neck. The Yugoslav news agency Tanjug says they total about \$6.5 billion but foreign currency reserves are less than half that.

Western diplomats say Yugoslavia's allies are unlikely to offer much, if any, relief. Russia, a key oil supplier, supports sanctions and Greece and Romania, conduits for oil supplies, are also obliged to comply with sanctions.

"Serbia seemed to believe it would get away with it even up to the very last minute. But now they have few friends left and it looks like they have burned their last bridges," a Western economist based in Belgrade said.

Retail prices jumped by 80.5 per cent in Serbia and 80.9 per cent in Montenegro, the two republics left in Yugoslavia, after the Federal Statistics Office told a news conference.

"The last 10 days of May were not taken into account for the inflation rate estimates for this month," said Mirjana Renkovic, assistant director general of the statistics office.

"In that period prices of vital consumer goods, like petrol, bread and meat, went up," she pointed out.

Prices have risen by 786.5 per cent in the first five months of 1992, according to Tanjug. The National Bank said the country's inflation rate in April was 73 per cent — then a record.

Independent economists say nearly a third of Serbia's population is living below the subsistence level set by the World Bank.

The National Bank said last week it was postponing introducing a law prohibiting black market hard currency deals because of difficulties enforcing it.

The black market has flourished this year as foreign currency became scarce. The bank says this has helped fuel inflation.

Djordje Nicovic, a National Bank director, said: "It is impossible to enforce the law under the present chaotic conditions."

Last Thursday, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic said the rump Yugoslav state owed \$4 billion to foreign creditors. But foreign currency reserves have dropped to \$2.7 billion.

Taiwan dollar rise alarms monetary authorities, exporters

TAIPEI (R) — The appreciation of the Taiwan dollar to record highs last week is profiting currency speculators but alarming monetary authorities and businessmen who fear it could hurt an export boom.

Boyed by Taiwan's trade surplus and domestic interest rates well above U.S. rates, the local currency climbed to a record close of 24.90 to the U.S. dollar Saturday, up from its previous peak of 24.91 Friday.

Foreign exchange dealers and economists said pressure for appreciation was intense and the Taiwan dollar, which has risen from around 27 in mid-1991, was likely to continue climbing.

Banks and companies bought the Taiwan dollar in the belief that it would hit new highs in June, dealers said. Last week's plunge of the U.S. dollar against major foreign currencies added to pressure for Taiwan dollar appreciation.

"The Taiwan dollar could reach 24.85 in a few days and then possibly 24.80," said a senior dealer at a foreign bank.

A survey of 16 major Taiwanese corporations last week by the Economic Daily News, a leading financial newspaper, found 11 of them expected the Taiwan dollar to appreciate. They forecast a rate between 24 and 24.8 at the end of this year.

Economists say Taiwan's trade surplus, which soared 109 per cent from a year earlier to \$4.03 billion in the first four months of 1992, is pushing the Taiwan dollar higher as exporters remit their earnings back to the island.

The currency appreciation, which tends to make Taiwanese goods more expensive in overseas markets, has sparked sharp protests from local businessmen and heavy political pressure on the government to stabilise the exchange rate.

Businessmen say profits are

being squeezed by the appreciation and a further rise of the Taiwan dollar could seriously damage the island's competitiveness.

"To some extent the businessmen's complaints are exaggerated. But profits will certainly suffer as the Taiwan dollar nears the 24 level," said Norman Yin, banking professor at National Chengchi University.

Central bank governor Samuel Shieh has been making almost daily statements denying the Taiwan dollar has room to appreciate, arguing that capital outflows for investment mean supply and demand in the foreign exchange market are balanced.

Currency speculators will "suffer big losses" if they continue pushing the Taiwan dollar higher,

he told reporters.

Foreign exchange dealers say the central bank has been intervening in the market to slow the Taiwan dollar's rise. The central bank says it is merely helping to "smooth trade" and is not trying to manipulate the market.

Dealers say the central bank may be reluctant to intervene more strongly because of pressure from the United States. The U.S. Treasury in May accused Taiwan of manipulating the exchange rate and said the Taiwan dollar should rise further.

The central bank's room for manoeuvre is also limited because it is being forced to keep interest rates high to fight inflation, which hit an 18-month high of 6.14 per cent in April.

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Yugoslavia holds elections in shadow of international isolation

BELGRADE (AP) — Facing worldwide condemnation, a defiant Yugoslavia denounced the United States and Russia Sunday and held elections designed to legitimize the rule of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

The main opposition parties in Serbia and its tiny ally Montenegro, the only other republic remaining in Yugoslavia, are boycotting the hastily called parliamentary and local elections.

The vote, criticised by international organisations as undemocratic, comes a day after the U.N. Security Council imposed severe economic sanctions in an attempt to halt some of Europe's bloodiest fighting since World War II.

The sanctions include a trade ban, an oil embargo and a freeze on overseas assets and airline flights. Imports of food and humanitarian supplies would be allowed.

The Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency said Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland were the first to suspend the landing and overflight rights of JAT, the Yugoslav airline.

Tanjug, which usually carries Yugoslavia's official pronouncements, sharply denounced the United States and Serbia's traditional ally Russia for voting in favour of the sanctions Saturday.

It said Russia's vote "came as a cold shower" showing that the former ally has adopted "a role of an assistant in directing the Western chorus of denouncing Serbia's policy."

"From a former superpower, Russia is slowly turning into a regional, local player," Tanjug said.

Americans have opted for "an aggressive policy" against Serbia and implemented tough sanctions against the state "because they know that Serbia could not be thrown to its knees" by military means like Iraq, Tanjug said.

The United Nations and most of the world blame Serbia and Montenegro for the escalation of ethnic warfare in Bosnia, pitting Serbs against Slavic Muslims and

Croats.

"This is a price we have to pay because we are helping Serbs outside Serbia," Mr. Milosevic said of the sanctions while casting his ballot.

"We have not committed any aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina," he said, adding he did not expect the sanctions to last long and that Serbia would strive to have them lifted.

At least 2,200 people have died in the Bosnian fighting since Muslims and Croats, nearly 60 per cent of the state's 4.3 million people, voted on Feb. 29 to secede from Yugoslavia. Serbs oppose independence.

The embattled Bosnian capital of Sarajevo was generally quiet overnight, except for sporadic machine-gun fire around Yugoslav army barracks where some 800 federal soldiers remained trapped by Muslims.

Yugoslav leaders resumed their defiant stance after failing to ward off the U.N. sanctions with an 11th-hour conciliatory proposal for an international peace conference and an appeal to the United States and Russia to assume joint command over the warring sides in strife-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Nikola Sainovic, Serbia's vice premier, said before the sanctions were imposed that the "oil embargo will not influence the mood of the Serbian people. If necessary, Serbs will walk."

Serbian TV said Serbia anticipated the oil embargo by importing twice its normal oil needs and accumulating reserves to last several months.

But Belgrade residents went panic shopping for staples Sunday and drivers lined up for gasoline.

Mr. Milosevic's credibility rests on Sunday's vote, which requires a turnout of 50 per cent of the electorate to be valid. Pre-election polls taken by the government indicated he was the favourite, but only 12 of 79 registered parties are taking part.

Mr. Milosevic said the election's outcome was crucial to the



Muslim prisoners of war in a village near Sarajevo are transported to jail after being captured by Serbs

formation of the new Yugoslavia.

"The constitution (of new Yugoslavia) is a condition for regulating political relations with the international community," Mr. Milosevic said, appealing to Serbs to vote.

But early morning turnout in Belgrade was low after polls opened at 7 a.m. (0500 GMT). They are to close at 7 p.m. (1700 GMT). First unofficial results are expected late Monday.

Anti-war sentiment has grown in Yugoslavia, which has borne the burden of financing war efforts on the side of Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia. Fighting in Croatia subsided in January with a U.N.-brokered truce.

Vuk Draskovic, leader of Serbia's largest opposition movement, the Serbian Renewal Movement, in calling for the boycott, appealed to citizens to "show the world that another Serbia exists: A Serbia of life and not of death; A Serbia of computers and not of Kalashnikovs; A Serbia of the future and not the past."

The opposition has been unable to rally support against Mr. Milosevic since he ordered tanks

into the streets of Belgrade to put down anti-government protests in March, 1991.

That could change as international isolation and sanctions begin to bite.

Meanwhile, the walled Croatian port of Dubrovnik was sheltered for the third day running Sunday, sending people running for cover.

A Reuters correspondent in the town said black smoke billowed from around the main fire station, just outside the walls of the old quarter and missiles whistled overhead before crashing into the water at the foot of its ramparts.

The attack emptied churches and interrupted celebrations of statehood day, the second anniversary of the formation of the Croatian parliament after Communists were ousted in the republic's first free elections since World War II.

The latest attacks were the worst since a Yugoslav army bombardment of the medieval town, called the "pearl of the Adriatic" for its magnificent Renaissance and baroque architecture, six months ago.

Albania prompts minor crisis at NATO

BRUSSELS (R) — Tiny, impoverished Albania has caused something of a crisis at NATO — because it asked to join a new grouping that links the alliance with its former Soviet and Eastern European enemies.

NATO diplomats are arguing over whether to admit the Balkan state, in a debate which goes to the heart of the alliance's new role and illuminates the confusion and fragmentation that is plaguing post-cold war Europe.

NATO set up a "cooperation council" last year as a way of offering formal ties to its old Warsaw Pact enemies, without giving them membership or security guarantees that might obligate the West to send troops if war broke out in Eastern Europe.

As the Soviet Union fell apart, membership of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council proliferated and now totals 36. Foreign ministers from council members, including all NATO nations, will meet in Oslo this week.

But Albania, which asked to join the body earlier this month after throwing off Stalinist rule, poses a special problem.

When communism in Eastern Europe finally fell apart, Albania was not aligned — it hated both military blocs with a passion. The new council is intended for alliance members and the various parts of the old Soviet empire, not for non-aligned countries.

The trouble is, history has thrown a spanner into the works. Albania was in fact a founder member of the Warsaw Pact in 1955, although it left in 1968.

"It's a bit of a Pandora's box," said one NATO diplomat.

"If we admit Albania, we could be setting a precedent to let other people in that most of us would really rather not deal with. On the other hand, how can we leave out a country that actually had the courage to leave the Warsaw Pact?"

The argument may appear obscure. But NATO ambassadors have had lengthy discussions on the subject, because they are worried about the wider implications and the precedents set.

Everyone actually thinks Albania is a deserving case, but we cannot agree on the reasons why we should admit them."

Some NATO nations, including Germany, would like to include other new European states like Croatia in the cooperation council, arguing that it gives them shelter in stormy times.

Others are worried that extending the council could indirectly risk getting NATO involved in messy regional conflicts like the one in Yugoslavia. They also say NATO and its old enemies still have exclusive business of their own to deal with.

There are also those who say that extending council membership to others will undermine the 52-nation Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

Thai parliament leader to propose new premier

BANGKOK (R) — The president of Thailand's parliament said he would submit the name of a new premier to the king Monday, after more than a week of political deadlock since General Suchinda Kraprayoon was driven from office.

A reporter on military-controlled television Channel 7 Sunday afternoon said the parliamentary president, Arthit Uthairat, hinted to reporters that the new premier would be a civilian, but gave no other details.

Sources in the ruling pro-military coalition said earlier that Mr. Arthit would nominate retired Air Chief Marshal Somboon Rahong in an audience with constitutional monarch, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, Monday.

Whether Mr. Somboon, a member of parliament and leader of the Chart Thai Party, is considered a civilian now he has retired from the military is unclear.

An aide to Mr. Somboon repeated that his boss, the former director of Thailand's airports, did not want the job. The aide said Mr. Somboon would be travelling in the north of the country for the next two days and had not been informed of the possibility of a royal audience.

"We need a brave decision by the president of parliament to take a risk and take decisive action otherwise forming a new coalition will be prolonged," the aide said.

Mr. Somboon's appointment would enrage pro-democracy activists who dismiss him as a tool of the supreme military commander, Air Chief Marshal Kasat Rojananil.

They want the supreme com-

mander put on trial for murder along with Gen. Suchinda and others held responsible for troops who opened fire on mass anti-government protesters two weeks ago, killing scores.

Mr. Arthit said last week that he had delayed submitting a name to the king on the advice of elder statesman Prem Tinsulanonda, who urged him to proceed with the utmost caution.

Opposition parties say they would refuse to work with anyone nominated by the coalition, which they say shares the blame for the shootings.

The coalition's selection of Gen. Suchinda as premier on April 7 even though he was not an elected member of parliament was the factor that sparked the protests. Gen. Suchinda resigned on May 24, amid domestic and international outrage at the bloodshed.

Supporters of General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh, head of the largest parliamentary opposition party, continued to press his claim to be named head of a minority government.

The Confederation For Democracy, leaders of the month-long anti-Suchinda protests, Saturday urged that a caretaker prime minister be named who would dissolve parliament and run the government through new elections.

"We will have no objection if there is a royally appointed caretaker," a statement issued by the group said.

The confederation said it would accept a non-member of parliament to fill this interim post.

Philippines may offer access to U.S. forces

MANILA (R) — General Fidel Ramos, front-runner in the fight for the Philippine presidency, says he plans to order an early review of Manila's relations with Washington and expects the country to shift closer to Japan.

U.S. officials believe Gen. Ramos, a West Point-educated former Philippine Armed Forces chief, will improve ties with Washington soured by a Philippine Senate decision to eject U.S. forces from the former American colony.

Diplomats said Washington would undoubtedly be pleased by news that Philippine Foreign Secretary Raul Manglapus, who backed Gen. Ramos in the election, intends to step down at the end of President Corason Aquino's term on June 30.

Mr. Manglapus, who negotiated the rejected U.S. military bases treaty, said he plans to go back to his law practice.

In an interview, Gen. Ramos said the review of relations could include possible access arrangements for U.S. forces at Subic Naval Base and the adjoining Cebu Point Air Base.

He said Admiral Charles Larson, commander of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region, had expressed interest in continued access arrangements after the last American troops withdraw from the Philippines by the end of the year.

But Mrs. Aquino proved a great disappointment to many in Washington as she stumbled on reforms and appointed people like Mr. Manglapus, whom the United States saw as anti-American.

"We will undertake a very early review of the entire range of U.S.-Philippine relations, especially the economic," said Gen. Ramos in an interview Saturday just minutes after proclaiming himself the winner in the May 11 elections.

The Philippine Congress still has to give the official result, but is not expected to come out with a final vote tally for two weeks.

The 64-year-old retired general said the mutual defence treaty between the two countries, which is now more than 40 years old, would be included in the review.

Adm. Larson, who visited Manila last week, said Friday that Communist North Korea was now the main threat to security and stability in Asia and urged Washington's allies in the region to cooperate closely to contain it.

When Mrs. Aquino came to power six years ago in a "people's revolution" that ousted Dictator Ferdinand Marcos, the United States embraced her enthusiastically and was ready to do all it could to help its Asian ally rebuild a democracy.

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J.R.'s ranch sold at auction

DALLAS (R) — Southfork, the ranch that for 10 years was home base to J.R. Ewing and his family during the run of the television series Dallas, was sold at auction for \$2.6 million to an Arizona businessman. "Interest in the auction was tremendous," said Jim McCallough, sales manager of Progressive Auctions of Kansas City, Missouri. "I think the buyer certainly got his money's worth."

Rea Maughan, who made the successful bid, said the ranch would reopen as a convention centre as soon as possible. The president of Forever Living Products Inc. has interests in resorts in Anchorage, the Grand Tetons in Wyoming, Glacier National Park, and Colorado. "What really sold us ... was the beautiful convention centre," said Mr. Maughan. The 41-acre (about 17 hectares) ranch was licensed in recent years by Lorimar Television, which produced Dallas, for use as a tourist attraction. Up to 400,000 people visited the ranch annually at one point. Dallas ran from 1979 to 1990. At one point it was the most popular programme on U.S. television and was seen all over the world.

FBI nabs nude Madonna pictures

WEST HOLLYWOOD, California (AP) — An FBI sting operation has recovered 44 nude photographs of Madonna that allegedly were stolen from a collection being used for an upcoming book of erotica featuring the singer-actress. A man offered to sell the pictures for \$100,000 to an undercover agent posing as a buyer for a British tabloid newspaper, Charlie J. Parsons, special agent in charge of the FBI's Los Angeles office, said. The man was detained and interviewed after the FBI confirmed the photos were authentic. He was not immediately charged. Mr. Parsons said in a statement. "The book, due in October, will be a collection of pictures by fashion photographer Steven Meisel of Madonna in various states of undress. The pictures will be accompanied by stories and poems. Madonna, 33, is finishing the movie *Body of Evidence* with Willem Dafoe and Joe Mantegna. A spokeswoman said Madonna was aware the photographs had been recovered.

Woman hits record \$9.3 million jackpot on slot machine

RENO, Nevada (AP) — A woman hit a record \$9.3 million jackpot playing a progressive \$1 slot machine system. The woman bet \$12 before hitting the Megabucks jackpot at Harrah's Reno, said Rick Sorenson, a spokesman for International Game Technology, creator of the Megabucks Progressive System links 628 slot machines in 127 Nevada casinos to a single jackpot that builds from a base of \$3 million. The winner, a 60-year-old nurse from Sacramento, wasn't identified by name at her request. Mr. Sorenson said. The total payoff was \$9,346,876.45, which the woman will receive in 20 annual installments. The previous record Megabucks jackpot of \$6.8 million was won in 1988 in Reno.

Catholics protest ordination of married Episcopalian

ATLANTA (AP) — Calling Vatican laws on the priesthood hypocritical, 20 Roman Catholics picketed outside the ordination of a married Episcopalian as a Catholic priest. The Rev. David Dye took his vows before about 200 people at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church. He became one of about 70 married Episcopalian clergymen in the United States, who have converted to the Catholic priesthood. Outside, the demonstrators stood quietly and held signs calling for the church to ordain women as priests and allow Catholic priests to marry. They didn't interfere with Fr. Dye's ordination. "We think the priesthood should be open to all: Male and female, married and celibate," said George Clements, a Catholic layman who organised the protest. "We do not oppose Father Dye, we welcome him. But this action is hypocritical and sexist." A spokesman for the Atlanta Archdiocese, the Rev. Peter Dora, said the presence of the protesters placed a "pall over the occasion." Fr. Dye, who entered the church by a back door, didn't comment. Fr. Dye, a father of three, left the Episcopal priesthood to become a Catholic in 1988. He is the Catholic chaplain at Georgia State University.

Haiti enacts law to replace interim leaders

PORT-AU-PRINCE (AP) — The military-backed government has enacted a law that would replace Haiti's interim president and prime minister with a single executive, officials said.

Parliament is reorganising the government but making no provisions for the return of ousted President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The military opposes his reinstatement.

An opposition politician said Saturday there will be no peace without the return of Mr. Aristide, Haiti's first freely elected president. Student groups have called for anti-government protests Monday.

The flood of would-be refugees continued unabated Saturday despite President George Bush's order to repatriate Haitians without first checking to see if they were being persecuted.

One Haitian jumped overboard in an attempt to kill himself Saturday after being returned to Port-Au-Prince on a U.S. Coast Guard cutter. He was one of a record 909 Haitian boat people returned in one day.

Meanwhile, reports Saturday said attackers burned down an army outpost near the southern city of Les Cayes, an Aristide stronghold, Friday night. The military arrested scores of people, including Les Cayes' Deputy mayor, the independent Haitian Press Agency quoted witnesses as saying.

Army Col. Jean-Robert Gabriel said assailants in two vehicles also sprayed the post with gunfire, according to Voice of America's (VOA) Creole-language service. (VOA) said the troops fled the burning outpost.

The law provides for an all-powerful prime minister who would stand in for president, a high government official said Saturday. He said the presidency would remain vacant until a definitive solution is found to end the crisis that began with the army's toppling of Mr. Aristide in September.

It was published Friday night in the government's official gazette, the official said, on condition of anonymity. Interim president Joseph Nerette and Prime Minister Jean-Jacques Honorat signed the document Monday.

Meanwhile, a Haitian forced back to his homeland Saturday leapt off a U.S. Coast Guard cutter, tried to hang himself and fought off rescuers, screaming: "I prefer to die."

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Students occupy central Seoul

SEOUL (R) — Tens of protesting students broke through police cordons Sunday to triumphantly occupy the centre of Seoul in the largest anti-government demonstration this year. About 30,000 students from 180 South Korean universities and colleges nationwide marched from an eastern Seoul campus chanting and waving flags but, in a departure from their usual practice in recent years, hurled no rocks or petrol bombs. Riot police, who claimed back central Seoul after about two hours, blocked roads and blanketed the business district with choking clouds of pepper gas. It sent hotel guests and shoppers fleeing. Shopkeepers hastily hauled down shutters.

U.S. fighter co-pilot found dead

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — The co-pilot of a U.S. F/A-18 fighter jet which crashed in Malaysia's southern state of Johor Friday has been found dead, a police official said Sunday. A Royal Malaysian Air Force rescue team found the co-pilot strapped to his seat about 50 metres from the plane wreckage Saturday, said Abdul Majid Hamid, deputy officer in charge at the town of Kota Tinggi near the crash site. A U.S. embassy statement said the name of the dead crewman, who has been identified only as First Lieutenant Kelly, was being withheld until his next-of-kin was informed. The fighter plane was on its way back to the Marine Corps air station at Iwakuni in Japan after a routine deployment in Singapore when it encountered problems and tried to return to the island-state. The two crew members ejected into jungle before the plane crashed. The pilot was rescued shortly after by a Singapore Air Force helicopter.

N. Korea honours 3 dead soldiers

TOKYO (R) — North Korean radio has reported the posthumous award of the country's highest military honour to three soldiers recently killed in action, the Japanese monitoring service Radio Press said Sunday. Japanese newspapers said the report could refer only to the three soldiers killed by South Korean troops on May 22 on the tense border dividing the Korean peninsula. Seoul said the three were shot after they entered the Southern section of the heavily fortified demilitarised zone. North Korea has denied sending troops into the South and accused Seoul of manufacturing the incident. In the broadcast monitored by Radio Press, Radio Pyongyang said Kim Jong-Il, supreme military commander and son and heir to North Korean President Kim Il-Sung, declared the three dead men "heroes of the republic."

Grachev: Romania arming Moldova

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian defence minister Pavel Grachev has accused Romania of arming its brethren in Moldova in their ethnic battle with slavic separatists, news media reported. Moldovan forces are at a standoff with the mostly Russian and Ukrainian residents of Trans-Dniester, a strip of eastern Moldova that has taken up arms against Moldova, fearing it will reunite with Romania. In another former Soviet hotspot, Armenian and Azerbaijani fighters exchanged gun and rocket fire Saturday around the disputed regions of Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhichevan, both formally controlled by Azerbaijan. The sides have battled for four years over the predominantly Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh. Fighting spread this month to Nakhichevan, located within Armenia on the border with Turkey and Iran. The Armenian interior ministry said an Armenian woman was killed by sniper fire from a town in Nakhichevan and an Armenian village was shelled. Two people were wounded in Nagorno-Karabakh when Azerbaijani forces shelled the town of Gadut, the Nagorno-Karabakh Parliament Press Office said. The press office also said two Armenian shepherds were taken hostage in the Idzhevan region outside Nagorno-Karabakh, and the corpses of three other abducted Armenians were found Saturday.

21 die in Indian gas explosion

BOMBAY (AP) — A gas cylinder exploded at a restaurant as people ate breakfast Sunday, killing 21 of them, authorities said. Only one customer was able to escape because the cylinder, used to cook meals, was located outside the entrance, the only door in the building in Dhavi, a large slum in north-central Bombay. The windows were sealed by with iron grills, said duty officers at the police and fire control centres.

Fujimori rules out plebiscite

LIMA (R) — President Alberto Fujimori Saturday ruled out a plebiscite on his virtual one-man rule and was to immediately call a vote for a constituent congress, the head of an Organisation of American States (OAS) team mediating Peru's political crisis said.

Mr. Fujimori's decision was welcomed by the political opposition but the stalemate on a dialogue between him and forces represented in Peru's dissolved Congress continued.

Mr. Fujimori dissolved Congress and temporarily closed the courts on April 5 saying they had blocked his efforts to fight leftist guerrillas and the drug trade.

Hector Gros Espiell, Uruguay's foreign minister, and OAS Secretary General Joao Baena Soares met for 50 minutes with Mr. Fujimori and three cabinet ministers in government palace.

He also is said to be surprised and bewildered by the surge in support for Ross Perot.

The Texan billionaire has tapped a tidal wave of voter discontent and for the present at least, he is the darling of a large segment of the electorate.

A recent poll in California showed Mr. Perot would easily defeat both Mr. Bush and likely Democratic candidate Bill Clinton in that crucial state if the presidential election were held now.

Forty-one per cent of those surveyed said they supported the tycoon, compared to 24 per cent for Mr. Bush and 22 for Mr. Clinton.

"It hasn't been much fun in the political arena lately. We've been hammered out there a little bit," Mr. Bush told a sympathetic audience in Arizona Thursday.

"Somebody said, 'That builds character.' I said, 'I'm a little long on character and looking forward to a change,'" he added.

Not surprisingly, Mr. Bush's frustration has reverberated through the White House and his nearby campaign headquarters.

There has been internal bicker-

ing and finger-pointing, and a spate of media reports that a major staff shakeup is imminent.

"Absolutely not," Mr. Bush said when he was asked about a story in Saturday's Washington Post that White House chief of staff Sam Skinner might be dumped for ineffectiveness.

Mr. Skinner took over the job only last December, replacing John Sununu, whose abrasive style and free-wheeling use of perks was said to have brought on the president's political problems.

Under the favourite scenario of some Bush underlings, Mr. Skinner would be replaced by Secretary of State James Baker, the president's friend of three decades and closest adviser.

Sources close to Mr. Bush said neither he nor Mr. Baker wants the secretary of state to become chief of staff, because it would represent a step back for Mr. Baker and make Mr. Bush look panicky.

"If the White House looks chaotic now, think of the impression of disarray another shakeup at the top would cause," said one insider.

Nevertheless, some of those familiar with the situation believe that the Bush organisation badly needs tuning.

"There are too many burnt-out cases who are more interested in preserving their parking spaces than they are in getting the president re-elected," one staff member complained.

Mr. Bush said last December he would do whatever it takes to win another four years in office, but is resisting pressure to modify lines of authority.